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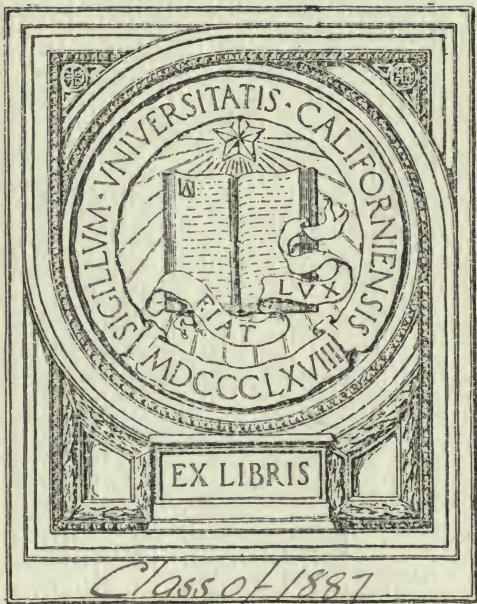
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To my Old Schoolmate-
H. H. Sherwood.

Compliments

Frank De Gurse.



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DUCAL HAPS

9852

A Drama in Four Acts

BY

FRANK DE GUERRE

Gift of
California

SAN FRANCISCO
PRESS OF UPTON BROS.

1901

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CHARACTERS

DUKE. *Of Calais.*

CEDO. *Bosom companion of the Duke.*

BARTO } *Italian lords, in league with smugglers.*
ANDREA }

MONSIEUR FAERIET. *An eccentric citizen of Calais.*

COURET. *Ducal steward—old retainer of the duke.*

MIRIEUX } *Cooks and Bakers in the ducal household.*
GREPIEUX }
LANDIEUX }

WAR MESSENGER.

BLANCHE. *Daughter to M. Farriet.*

ADELAIDE. *Friend to Blanche.*

LAUNDRESS.

Courtiers, Jurors, Constables, Messengers, Valets, Guards, etc.

SCENE—Sea-coast province of France.

Time—Fifteenth Century.

Class of 1887

DU CAL HAPS.

A DRAMA

IN FOUR ACTS

By FRANK DE GUERRE

ACT I.

SCENE. A Garden with an Arcade and Palace in the back ground.

[*Enter Couret and Baker.*]

COURET.

Yours in all reverence, man, speak on—
Yet I will heed no further than my wit
Doth bid me give a willing countenance.

BAKER.

So far then heed: That our beloved Duke
Came rightly by his state, we are apprised;
But that he caters for the public weal,
Or seeks to wield the ducal power with
That royal—firm—unflinching dignity
The populace expect, stands now in doubt.
As I sincerely love the youthful duke,
I would not have his motives misconstrued,
Yet he has acted strangely, given out
So poor a show of statesmanship that men
Well tuned in governing have marked his flaws.

COURET.

Be quiet ! friend, harp not so of the past;
On, to a bright and peaceful future look.
What's past defies all cure; then why dilate
On threadbare happenings immured in doubt,
When presaged ills so copiously admit
Of themes for their prevention.

BAKER.

Ah ! You speak

As did the great Goliath when he met
The stripling David; likely you may learn
That simple faults are sometimes hardest conquered.

COURET.

So craven foes are best encountered with
A fierce exterior, a blaz'ning tongue
And confident superiority.
What, if I stand and gape, their tongues
The while browbeating all that tends to right !
Should I in muteness keep and list their gab ?
Or by an offish independence own
Myself a party to their calumny ?
Look now, how pleasantly the plan conceives !

BAKER.

I own it sets us in peculiar plights,
Yet have we no alternative than that
We must our tipping conscience keep within
A peaceful quietude.

COURET.

You do mistake,

More rests with us than to assume defense;
Has mighty God but given wit to men
As fenders for their private woes ? Or has
He left injunctions on the precious gift,
Entailing to our needful like the gist
Of its inherent goodness ? Sir, had I
A cat—

BAKER.

Aye, if you had a thousand cats,
The court must have fresh bread ! A plague on you !
I took you for a reas'ner, now I find
You more affect the moralist, who once
So preached unto his fellowmen, that those
Who but for him had kept their mean turned bout
And dived in freshly learned iniquity.
Thus—craving pity, we do often show
The which we would not have our neighbors know.
Peace to the question ! let this be an end,
Though ye be my senior, I tell thee friend—

More is there kneaded in our own affairs,
That closer on the duke's existence bears.
Come on, I'll strike thee in a better vein,
Before this subject I essay again.

(*Exeunt.*)

Enter CEDO shabbily attired, reading a letter.

CEDO. "*If you would know a thing or two*"—(Faith, I wouldn't mind a thing or three)—"*that wanders from your routine in life, don your worst clothes,*"—(I was about to say I had no worse clothes, thinking my court togs were all I owned, but haply by an over-look in well agreeing times this suit was left me,)—"and come secretly to me to-morrow morning. I will be above the arcade at eight o'clock.

Armand Couret."

Now is the ordered time and this the place,
That I must hearken to a tale so base,
It raises me before my wonted time,
And stands me shiv'ring in a wintry clime.
Woe unto you and yours, Armand Couret,
The cost you'll rue forever and a day,
If that you tinge my hearing with a yarn,
That boasts no good nor savors aught in harm.
Ah! in the nick of time. Good morning, friend!

(*Enter Couret.*)

COURT. Good morning, and a host of well earn'd thanks.

CEDO.

True to your note's most strange requirements,
By reason of whose ambiguity,
I more for curiosity than gain,
Attend your will.

COURT.

Aye, you will soon admit

The profit worth the venture; know you this,—
There's not a domiciled employee on
The duke's payroll, but doth interpret him
(To questioning outsiders,) as an ass;
When this not surfeits they oft congregate
In whisp'ring mobs, and trade their sev'ral points,
To be inflated by repeated telling.

CEDO.

Why, this is treason in its greatest bourne!
The very depth of piracy!

COURT.

And so

Since his installment hath the order been,
No more our ruler makes but hath a rude
Discordant echo in their criticisms.

CEDO.

Is this in progress now? If so I will
Confront the scandal mongers and disperse
The rabid meeting as a bombshell would

A ladies' jewel case !

COURT.

That were poor policy,

To thus ignore my finesse, and scout on
 A thoughtless and impromptu mission bred,
 From out the prejudicial hearing of
 A long matured plan; these were the means
 That flooded his predecessors and gave him
 The office he was born to. Sir, I watch'd
 The former ducal reigning well; saw when
 The first conspiring seed took root, Beheld
 The many loose and varied discontents
 Accounted nothing by the noble sires,
 Till stood their midst a forward nucleus
 (A very Gabriel around whom flock'd
 Weak-kneed dissenters and apostates all),
 Then did they see their power recognized,
 And, with entire accord arose and smote
 Their most impotent ruler to the earth !
 Should not this teach the mighty cunning? Ah!
 Ye men of higher state, look much too far;
 While brooding on a distant phantom fear,
 Your stagnant intervening ground doth form
 A nest for treasoning conspirators.
 Mark! If you be not strong in your stronghold,
 (Which is the sanctum of domestic weal,)
 Beware the outer sieging! You perchance
 May think I am a vain, presumptuous wretch
 In overstepping so the hireling's bound,
 And leading you; (so far above my sphere.)
 Yet you must know the spirit of the times
 Will oft necessitate that kings shall stoop
 To be advised of men, not worthy of
 A Christian burial. But that my lot
 Would not allow me to excite their ire,
 I would at once unto the duke unfold
 My knowledge of his set.

CEDO.

I rather would

Believe you were possessed of some ill wind
 Which venting crooked truth gives out a lie,
 Then think (in mercy) you some part abscond,
 That might a matter of more weight descry.

COURT.

Abide your time before my say, you flout,
 For shortly will the mongrels be about,
 May then your eyes my honest vouchers be,
 'Tis hard believing, still, 'tis truth to see.
 Look! Now they come, nay, stir not from this spot,
 The sharp'st observer here would know you not.

(*Enter Cooks, Valets, Hirelings of the Duke, etc.*)

COOK.

AN I say beef, he will accordance give,
Or what I choose, it matters not the kind,
No sapient stir opposes my set wish.
I verily believe, were I to cook
An old tann'd hide, he'd eat without complaint.

1ST VALET.

'Tis ever so with me, say what I will.
He enters straight and sanctions it with ~~eye~~ *aye*.
If he desires his brown mare saddled up,
And I the white suggest, (or say I black
Or dapple gray) in truth he'll not protest;
Or should he order some light vehicle,
And I a clumsy cart fetch out, 'twill suit,
Or bring I naught, the end his favor spies.
As for my riggings, they are always styled
To suit my fancy—hence my outward dress
Proverbial makes the common inquiry
“Which is the Duke?”

BAKER.

Most vain effrontery!

Know well thyself, proud egotist! and leave
Assumption of such highborn graces to
A better clown; Or if you needs must play
At postulation, let thy goal be
A mark within thy limit, lest thy name
(Which now but smacks of coxcomby,) will swell;
Augment itself from that you practice till
The word conceit be taken for 't! No more!
I have an innate loathing of such men,
Who when they prate use loose extremities,
Or when enjoying harmless parley, will
Abuse the list'ners' ear; all doubts of this
Were hushed, if you would but consider well
The tenor of his argument in which
By tacit vileness, open calumny,
Yea, broaching his lone tenet he would make
Apostates of us all! Heed him who will,
But I am for the duke, and would not rob
A better of his need! And so farewell.

(*Exit.*)

1ST VALET.

Good friends! Indulge me but a moment's time,
In that I'll prove (by confirmation of
Some present witnesses,) that I for truth
Have kept a strict observance, furthermore
Where'er the tale laid 'gainst the Duke, I've let
The rugged juttings of pernicious truth,
In silence seem as virtues; for conceit

Ask neighbors hereabout, and with my life
I'll stand the bout of your enquiring minds!

2D VALET.

Aye, marry, it no easy matter is
To slight agreement with our gracious Duke;
Why oft (in whims of contrariety,)
His orders with impunity I've cross'd,
Persuading him from his avowed intent,
As he'd no right to be an epicure,
But like a peevish, sickly child fresh wean'd,
Has appetite to suit some elder sage!
And thou, old pastry! Give free vent, I say!
How rides the subject of our chat with thee?
When thy deft fingers and thy slimy art
Doth stock the showing of thy labor with
Vile properties; doth make the leaven'd bread
To vie in heft the heaviest lead, doth singe
The cookies, waffles, and the butter cakes—
Leave to the rage of an ill-governed flame;—
When these and more of like similitude,
Are by your grace committed, How's the wind?
Conforms he to thy grave mishaps? or chides he thee,
That sober looks sit on thy floury phiz so well?

COURT.

Nay, lay it on when I'm the butt, and tune
Thy wriggling tongue as inclination prompts;
But spare thy manhood when the subject is
(By gleanings of thine own account,) a man
Empowered with a might, the bent of which
Could purge thy life of pleasure, yet prefers
To give a pleasing acquiescence where
Thy happiness requires. 'Tis scurvy sport
To lightly treat a matter of such moment,
To mock an infant Duke, who bears himself
As aged dukes ne'er did before; Who looks
So carefully to thy content, he'd give
No order past thy will.

2D VALET.

Thou speakest aright,

I am in all abash'd. When spoke I so
I lacked thought, but now I think, and lack
A tongue to rear excuses for my gab.

1ST VALET.

And may his tongue lose pow'r of speech, who first
Speaks illy of the Duke!

(*Enter LAUNDRESS.*)

COURT.

Ah! pretty maid—

(Give her good greeting friends.) What's out of tune,

That your initial visit falls upon
So cold a morn?

LAUNDRESS

Our loving Duke's astir,

And walks about with solemn deathlike tread;
And looks—I know not how, so very strange;
His laughing merry look, is sternly changed
To one of gloomiest perplexity;
He eyed me straight, yet saw me not, else would
He nod or speak to me; So he pass'd on,
So did he gaze on ev'ry common thing.
His right arm raising skyward, then his left,
Next followed both in wild confusion, or
A seeming supplication to his God;
Belike he's crazed, or hath some troublous ill
Too deeply rooted in his mind.

CEDO.

Crazy !

COURT.

How'er the sequel is, from this henceforth
His pleasure be my study.

LAUNDRESS.

Thanks Couret.

1ST VALET. And mine,

2D VALET.

And mine,

3D VALET.

And mine.

COURT.

So are we all

Bent on his future happiness; and home
For him will be, as home should be.

LAUNDRESS.

Well said !

If done, why better; now with right good will
We'll to our tasks. *(Exit)*

(Exeunt all but CEDO.)

CEDO.

Hum ! what a measly set !

The making of a man not 'mongst the lot
Mireux—he spoke the which abounds in flaws
And staled it by a repetition; then
Grepieux—no brighter wit has he than have
The common herd; but as a man in debt
Is ever loudest mouthed he must perforce
Maintain dull silence or too soon expose
The whence of his intelligence. Who's next?
Landieux, Ah! Yes, thy mouth should give thee room
What if thy form were well proportioned to
Thy roomy mug—I then were but a flea!
Alas! methinks the gods deformed thee so,
That flies in lieu of men might fear thee!
Then Jean—within the pale of his bright wit
Lies his deceit—the very lowest wretch!
To pose himself an equal of the Duke!

Ungrateful wretches all! Was it for ye
The Duke subverted his regal dignity?
I'll never think it,—but concoct a means
Whereby to segregate the malcontents,
Or All—the whipping post and banishment.

(Exit)

(Enter Duke in sombre meditation.)

DUKE.

A dream! A weird imagination! All!
Why give it sober thought? Yet am I help'd
To this grave state, by truths I cannot pass,
Nor doubt with cause, so vivid were they set
And played to life in my mind's recreation;
With tireless zeal and utmost nicety,
It pick'd my closest courtiers, saving few,
And cast them in a glowing, bungl'd heap,
With placards o'er each one, on which were written
Some fearful vice suggestive of the man;
Methought I saw a gaunt ungainly frame
Arising from a cloud of raging fire!
From out his mouth there leapt a brace of tongues,
Like serpents, fork'd, that spat white heat;
With arms outstretch'd, and piercing eyes askant,
He showed his loathing of the blemished mass;
Then on me turned his hideous ghostly glare,
Distorted features and his warning hand,
Conjuring me (in awe-commanding tone,)
Revise my ways and wield my sceptre with
More seeming grace; Then paused as 'twere to gain
New fledg'd momentum for another sally;
And I (transfixed with horror there withstood)
His fixed stare, bereft of speech and motion!
Anon, he opes his lips!—Thunder outnois'd!
Pandemonium! Ye gods forbid
My ears shall list another of the kind!
So highly season'd with severe rebukes—
My ev'ry good transformed to vilest ill,—
My ev'ry studied judgment silly prov'd
All trusted friends adjudg'd enemies;
Where saw I meanest faults virtues appear'd;
Where saw I purest virtue reigned faults;—
Contraries mingled—similar undone;—
Alternate freezing, boiling dire extremes,
Wag'd to their highest pitch, when nature's laws
O'erstrained, deposed his cruel tenancy
To yield me freedom of a waking hell!
Lives there a cause within this wretched world
So oft beset with grievous ills as mine?
Heir to the realm! A duke, alas a duke!
Much rather would I be a brainless pimp,

Or some contented knave of equal worth,
 Than as I am and jealousied the title,
 In whose drifts I meet my malcontent!
 All hallowed peace, sweet mother of content!—
 Come share with me thy soothing potent spell,
 And shield me from my aggravating self!—
 The soul-entrancing charm of thy depute
 Like sweetest perfume on the senses steals;
 Drowns all woes in soundless seas,
 Pares all ill to joyous weal,
 Kneads to love all bitter hate,
 And crowns thee queen of goodness!—
 Yet I am not for thee, nor thee for me;
 While seeming that I am, I better prove
 That, I am not. If ev'ry man were put
 Where bides his proper talent, where would I?
 But here alack, by fortune's faulty act
 I am a duke, and being duke, must duke it.
 What ho! I have a melancholic mate!
 He comes this way—his passage I'll await.
 'Tis said that men in trouble go in grooves
 Or act as counterparts;—So in his moves
 Will I as in a truthful mirror see
 How insignificant a duke may be.

(DUKE *steps aside.*)

(*Enter* BARTO.)

BARTO.

Full three-score times have I this arbor pass'd!
 Full three-score times have I in wonder glared
 Upon this empty space, that now should hold
 For my distress a living comforter!
 I'll call, perchance he doth so closely watch
 The doubtful standing of my business,
 Our rendezvous slips from his mind; Andreas!
 Andreas! Voice to the wind that hither brings
 Naught but a mocking echo. Patience! patience!
 But 'tis a wearing article; in me
 Now worn past remedy; for, lacking doubt
 'Tis past the 'pointed hour by a half,
 Yet does he truant play. Would he were here.

* * * * * (Paces the garden.)

The worst were preferable this suspense!

(*Enter* ANDREAS.)

Most welcome sight! proclaim thy longed for news!

ANDREAS.

Blunt, honest, friendship my apology
 For being pert, and starting on the point

That bears most heavy on the matter.
 With less ado I'll to the end, or to
 The ultimate beginning of the end;—
 I sped to Mileneux by thy commands,
 Sought out thy factor there, when in a whiff,
 Without a question, he thy all did tell,
 As if 'twere fact substantial, past all doubt,
 Thy lately blasted ventures, blighted hopes,
 Extol'd he to their furthest boundary,
 Intending rather to convince of loss,
 Then buoy thy spirits falsely. All thy ships
 Unto the dukedom now are confiscate,
 Aye, all as contraband the state has siez'd;
 Even now the messengers are arrived,
 Who voyage here this matter to unfold.

BARTO.

Straight to the Duke will they, then whither I?
 For when 'tis known, 'twere better I should die
 Than be upon so dire a purpose standing,
 Twixt life and death, meat for fools bandying.

ANDREAS.

Yea, when 'tis known, may then you seek your grave!
 But they no implicating knowledge have
 Of you, of yours, or tangible effects,
 So their report (with you) bounds in defects.

BARTO.

Then all is verity! My God, that I,
 Who in the ducal favor ranks most high,
 And entertain'd no title short of Sir!—
 That I whom kings and queens have audienced,
 Aye, knighted for my comely mien, where
 Undoubted valor rusted for a glance!—
 That I, whose word was deem'd sufficient bond
 For sums involving princely fortunes, should
 To penury by one mishap be cast!—
 The step's too great! too great! Still must I yield
 To decorate a niche in pauperdom!

ANDREAS.

Sh—Barto, Less of this! 'Twere follies heighth
 To brood on that where is no earthly help;
 Ne'er saw you hills but valleys did abound,
 Nor aught in purity beyond a flaw,
 Nor mortal state that mock'd not constancy.
 And would'st thou grasp unchanging nature's laws
 To make a mutable defective toy,
 Whereon the cravings of thy lot may feed?
 Would'st pass what was, what is, and will be? No!

So sure as water seeks the downward grade,
You on no bed can lie save that you've made!

BARTO.

Thou mock'st me with effects; pray quickly turn
To present causes, where they touch upon
A future circumvention.

ANDREAS. (*aside.*)

(I'll play it harsh,

Or seem it so, and wean him from this gloom.)
What should I say, that gives thee not offense?
Years have you liv'd a lie, made all believe
The costly manner of thy keeping,—the style
And number of thy banquets, the product of
Royal annuities as boundless as
The unfound treasures of the earth; whereas
To foot thy honest gainings would not show
The value of a penny.

BARTO.

Tut! Tut! man,

Have done with this, I'm in no mood for lectures,
Straight to the point!

ANDREAS.

How now, philosophy!

Creeps on the climax with such toward speed,
That here a mind in melancholy breath'd,
By followed respiration delves in anger?
By my true soul, this is the sort of mood
That betters good, diameters the girth,
Strips can't of-T—and makes the will the might.
I fear me much, were I to stand and wait
The winter through I would not stumble on
A more befitting moment to divulge
The import of the motion I would make.
Know then the true effects, ere I recount
The queer erratic manner of the cause;—
If fortune favors it, earth's heaven's yours;
But should it fail, hell's fire holds no heat
That sings where thy downfall will consume!

BARTO.

Out on you for a babbler! Say no more!—

ANDREAS.

'Twere better left unsaid than said without effect;
I know no course of thy avail, but marriage.

BARTO.

Why surely friend Andreas you are distraught!
I know but half a month and that's my all,
So save my prestige, should the limit fail.
Escape's my only chance; so please project
Some quicker move than now thy lips command.

ANDREAS.

Know you old Farriet?

BARTO.

I do; so far

As gossip's tongue gives knowledge of a neighbor;
The people say, (and rightly too I think)
He is a man within himself retired;
Has few acquaintances and fewer friends;
Is misanthropic and possessor of
More wealth, than any dweller in the land.

ANDREAS.

And is the sire of as sweet a maid,
As rare a group of virtue's choicest gifts,
As e'er on French soil trod; She may be called
A Venus resurrected for her shape
Which, when compared with other inborn charms,
Flies quickly from the eye of criticism.

BARTO.

Most like, but what imports her many charms
That bodes us aught for our advantage?

ANDREAS.

All—

Each sep'rate Christian grace reveals a point
Which aids us in our purpose; as she lacks
So do we lack; were she less than is she,
Our task were harder, but as she now is,
Her pure warm heart bears molding at our will.

BARTO.

Now can I tell the vane on this wild wind,
Yet for a starting move I am perplexed.

ANDREAS.

I have an idea (if you think no better,)
We will adopt and furnish speedy motion.
Straightway before the duke I will produce
Some score or so of affidavits (made
By men within the Holy-See entrenched.)
That Farriet has long unloyal been;
That he by virtue of--well we'll invent—
Doth stand amenable to common law.
What can the duke, but cause imprisonment?
Then for your courting; His fond daughter will
With pleading tongue the court besiege; urge all
To save her father; which entreaty none
(Not e'en the lowest vassal of the court)
Would harken to; Then yield your sympathy;
Make known to her thy power o'er the duke,
Which for her father's cause you'll aptly wield,—
Fill in with all the tender ifs and buts

So soothing to dejected minds,—Condole
In all the many ways that love (if there) would grasp.
If played aright this cannot fail
But breed for thee success;
Her maiden heart will turn to thee
And virgin love confess.

BARTO.

Come then, let's home, and this plan we'll mature
Though rife with grave faults, it is slow and sure.

(*Exeunt.* BARTO and ANDREAS.)

DUKE.

Hear I with other's ears, or have I borrowed eyes?
Is this the sequel of my wretched dream
Or dream I on and think I wake? But no!
My senses with undaunted pith now play;
What e'er I take in hand I know its feel.
Or that mine eyes reflect, I know its sight;
Still I would fain believe the lie! Barto,—
My yokemate and my dearest friend, a fraud?
Impossible! and yet 'tis true, else would
He mouth a firm denial when
That scheming villainous poltroon exposed
The trick of his apparent welfare.
Alas! when he who shares my bosom thoughts
Turns traitor and connives at benefit,
On whom can I rely?

Enter CEDO. (Properly attired)

CEDO.

Yours truly my lord

What is't that troubles you? Confide in me
As do the ladies all, find me but one
Who links mistrust with my grave title, I
Will give thee leave to go barefoot; Aye more
Cite me an adult male who airs me ill
His face I warrant you as black as coal
Or featured like an owl. (*aside*) (I'm out of tune,
The senseless jabber of a chattering ape,
A frequent source of pleasure, now annoys.)
My lord, I am not that I seem, I have
An other self—a silent partner here, (*placing hand on heart*)
Who will betimes (despite external show,)
Assert supremacy; And quick to grief
Is he, aye quicker, and you free my boast,
Than any of your count; and so, all thine.

DUKE.

Thanks for your proffer, but I have no need;
Mine being but a fancied ill, brooks not
The same condolence as a living fact.
Suffice it; all my reign has been a farce,

That through the revelations of a dream
I come to know myself, my friends, my foes,
My acts both good and bad, here lies my woe.

CEDO.

I've held thee better than this say would warrant
And if 'twere back'd not by effusions of
More sound portent, I'd reason thee insane;
Why dreams,—are but the wanderings of minds
Badly stomached; as such they should be treated
Not 'power'd with a speck of realism
Or ever troubled with an after thought.
Were I to tell the thousandth part
Of the frivolities I've dream'd,—
Of many chasms I have leapt,—
Of surging rivers savely swum,—
Of the aerial flights I've tak'n,—
Of scorching paths painlessly trod,—
Of beatings, smoth'rings I've endured
Whilest Morpheus possess'd my mind;
That stolid look would quit thy face,
Thy mouth would fly its firm set phase,
To find a quirk fit company
For thy light mirth.

DUKE.

Good friend, adjourn!

My trouble hath a better prop than that
I've broached to thee: Mark me, seest thou two men
Beyond the garden rail?

CEDO.

I do, my lord;

And if my vision prove not false, they are,
Within thy galaxy the brightest stars,
Lord Barto and his satellite Andrea.

DUKE.

Go, shadow them, (And if thou wouldst confirm
Thy boasted love,) lose not a sight of them.
Mark thou their slightest move as 'twere an act
Endangering the lives of all thou lovest.
Have thy report indited, plainly writ',
That I may keep it as a silent witness.

CEDO.

I've heard of mothers doubting sons,
Of sons their fathers killing;
Of jesters angling for their puns
A brother's lifeblood spilling—
But by the A in tar, this breach of trust
Doth seem the blackest, having precedence
O'er all I know of,—Come now, 'tis a joke?

DUKE.

If jokes be nurtured--fostered thus, then this
May be so call'd; And I would have it played
According to my diction, so begone!
Do as I bade thee!

CEDO.

E're thy echo's spent
I'll on thy mission be what e'er is meant.

(Exit.)

DUKE.

This then my fixed course hereafter be,
Judge men by what I know, not what I see.
Now will I nurse the plot with all amain,
Though in the lie I lose, in truth I gain.

(Exit.)

SCENE SECOND—Room in FARRIET'S house.

(Enter BLANCHE followed by ADELAIDE.)

ADA.

Baah! Virtue earneth not its own reward
Until 'tis tried,--There is no more in grace
Than is by grace perform'd,—They have the right
To be enroll'd amid the pure, who know
The pleasures of a sin—who crave its joys,
Yet with great effort curb their appetite,
And shun enticing sweets for virtues sake.
Who could not be a saint who would immure
Herself within such walls;—bedim her eyes
Bedwarf her mind,—and stint her vernal course
For fear that she might knowledge gain, and thus
Descry more force in sin than she could cope:
Such petty ignorance has no excuse
In this advanced age! Go to, my sweet,
Perplex the wise and learn the road to wisdom.

BLANCHE.

Now Adelaide, this is a say unkind;
I asked not to be canonized, nor yet,
Have I in thought or simplest act assum'd
That I a single christian grace possess'd
Not found among the poorest of your set.
And in opinion I would be no more
Than you or any honest girl who tries
To earn a virtue through a sin's aversion.

ADA.

Right! She who slides all faults must virtue hold.
And yet full knowledge of iniquity
Promotes a lasting good; The which to gain
Must find thee student to a diff'rent school.
I cannot aptly chide to those who weigh
My weakest, tamest words so heavily.

True, what's big fun for the little ones is little fun for big ones; Tastes, you know, will differ, but twixt our likings there is such a marked variance, it urges me to think you are beyond your teens;—For truly, Blanche, you act like an antiquated maid who being denied the marital fondling takes to the petting of a parcel of brutes—cats, dogs and poll-parrots;—and tiring of these, puts her hands in mourning by ploughing up the ground about some decrepit fuchsia, verbena or other outlandish plant. Now all these attentions are unappreciated, —your plants will bloom, fade, and die betimes; —your cat's tail will not bear a treading, and your poll will exclaim at most unseasonable times.

Why, do you know
A tithe of these endearments lavished on
The coldest most impassible of men,
Would make his frigid liver glow and change
Him to the silliest slave of passion?

BLANCHE.

Friend, counsel me not so! I would nor could—
Not seek a pleasure through the course of pain.
Nor will I be convinced that you would for
A transient joy, inflict a lifelong woe.

ADA.

Stay, Blanche; you judge too harshly of my notion. For by the grace of love you have no right to judge; you—who by your own admission have been imprisoned within these walls since your birth, and have never endured an hour's company with the sterner sex. How long, pray, does your dear anchorital papa intend that you shall play the nun?

BLANCHE.

No longer than I will it.

ADA.

Then will it no longer, Blanche, for my sake,—come and enter the world; come taste its joys and view its sorrows.

BLANCHE.

You ask no more kind friend than I would grant
If in the granting aught for good were gained.

ADA.

Where be the ill—and if no ill what then?
On fire we can gaze and not get burnt.
Make this stale fact most vividly appear
Within the ambit of thy father's ken
And his permission's granted ; for the rest
Six moons will find you in a husband blest.

(Exit.)

BLANCHE.

Why should I party be in such desires?
Where midst my range of neighbors can I see
More comforts—pleasures than abide with me?
O, friend ! Why didst thou urge me in a sort
That giving aye or nay in my retort?

(Enter FARRIET.)

Misleads devotion from its native wend
And wrongs a father to oblige a friend.

FARRIET.

Good daughter here—for lack of day, the night
(Time's truant substitute,) doth yield the hour
I gravely pledged diurnally to save
For our conjunctive weal and interchange
Of sweetest confidence; Not for a trick
In business would I my promise break,
No ! Nor for the weightiest matters casual.
The cause that renders my excuse, is blank,
'Tis neither here nor there, but 'tis a thing (*exhibits paper*)
Of most uncertain seem, being thrown in
When business waning I was free to look.
And look, and think I did, and now peruse;—
Anon my child, ere you this paper read,
Uncloud thy face, no penance will I veer,
For staying hence, when promise bound me here.

BLANCHE.

Kind father, right, but I'll no penance lay,
You do so rarely slip your plighted word
I cannot now be strict,—Yet for a boon
I'll press the deepest fount wherefrom you spurt
Your most endearing shows,—Be now in dread—
My wish it is to enter in the world !

FARRIET.

My sweetest, I had rather thou hadst't crav'd
The fauna of the frigid zone, the bud
And blossoms of centennial plants,—aye, each
And ev'ry rare exotic and sweet fern,
That wakes huge effort or commands great price !
La ! How I prate ! As though my selfish love

By thus advising you did help itself
 To its most wish'd for state—not so my child—
 Not thine for me, but ever mine for thee;—
 The order of my life doth this avouch.
 What that you would have I not then procur'd?
 No thought of cost, of time, or other part
 Did lose a gift to thee within the bounds
 Of mother nature, wherein all pleasure bides,—
 None find without elysian joy unchang'd.
 Hast quite forgott'n the brace of lines I taught
 When you with famished ears gave heed? If so
 I'll tell them o'er that you may choose anew,—
*"Those who in nature seek for pleasure
 Ne'er find content beyond their measure."*
 He has a glove indeed that fits all hands,
 Yet here is such a one possess'd; no ill
 But finds appeasement in't; No crescent hope
 But is companion'd; and your preacher too,
 Is here to his discredit shown; his best
 Is bettered and his opiated saws
 In brevity and dumbness are delivered.
 Then why seek out what is, unsought for, found,
 Be blest in that you have and fly the sin
 That lustre gives the world and sends thee shade.
 Fie on my age! my dotage I might say,
 That strives to check a course of nature, which
 The roll of years must instance! Have thy wish,
 With my unbiased permit you can now
 Devote your time unto society.

BLANCHE.

Believe me, I would rather have a no
 In kindness, than a yes so rudely giv'n.
 Hush we the matter now, ere long you may
 Report me with a freer will.

FARRIET.

No child,

I never yet, nor ever shall debar
 You from your slightest wish; though I
 May seem ungraciously to yield in this.
 There is no effable or unvoiced plea, (*Passes paper to BLANCHE*)
 Could make me wayer! For this parchment, you
 Must read—misunderstanding,—question,—I
 Will then my own interpretation give.

(BLANCHE reads.)

*"Friend to the cause and right support; (for so
 By acclamation thou art here proclaimed)
 We humbly thank thee for the favors past
 And give thee greeting ever; Our numbers now
 Are threbl'd, as a consequence our arms*

*Do fall ten thousand short in an equipment,—
Which deficiency our present urgent needs
Compel submittance to thy bounteous self;
Do but forward the means, and by thy hint
We will the duke o'erthrow 'fore this day week.*

(P. S.)

*The Farriets are soldiers of the sword,
Of little talk and much ado,—our note
I hope will so be Ta'en.*

JEAN LELIEVIERE."

Means this not something more than these stray lines
Upon their face suggest?

FARRIET.

A treason sure

Would this in any court be call'd, and I
No more transgressor than the babe unborn,
Am stuck here to receive it; Who should send
So queer a message to me, I could not
Upon my life give sating answer; That
I know of this foul Lelievriere falls short
Of commonest report. But this I know—
The sender of this note doth mean me harm!
And meet it is that we destroy; Go, child,
Despatch it in the flames. (*Loud and continued knocking with-
out, then enter several constables*).

How, now! Have we no servants 'bout the place
Can keep such base intruders out the gates?
Wherefore! Wherefore! Rude men! mock ye the law?
If so ye do, it shall be answered well!

1ST CON.

Mark men how ill he apes the saint! The law—
(Thou base conspiring knave!) doth only err
In thus permitting thy most wicked life!
If 'twere not so, thy wind, ere now were cut.
What may this be? (*snatches paper from Blanche*).
Lay to—I'll wage it is
A scrip divulging new unheard of crimes,
That he with cursed lucre has perform'd,
(Through mediums in beggary), under
The most alert and omnipresent ween
Of our force: Oh Treason! Bind him! We
A fearful danger brave by gazing on,
When he, perchance, hath here confederate hid,
Well drilled in bloody butcheries!

(*Enter BARTO*).
Hold slaves!

BARTO—

Have ye no care for age nor thought of youth,
That ye a simple summons of the court
Cannot deliver without such dire abuse?

Unhand him. I will answer to the Duke
 For all that's deficit in your commands.
 March out, and whilst you are upon these grounds
 Make you no more of your authority
 Than circumstances warrant.

1ST CON.

Here, my lord,

Look you on this and then be judge of us,
 If we've oe'rdone what we are sworn to do,
 This paper backs us in excuse, if not
 We then not understand our oath of office.

(*Exeunt* CON).

BARTO.

That soon will be considered, and for this (*presenting paper*)
 Good neighbor, friend, it reads quite harsh for you.
 For love of truth you are not fed'rate to
 Such men as Lelievriere? It cannot be
 That you would daily risk foreclosure of
 Such beatific home-born charms, to league
 With vandals in a losing cause?

FARRIET.

Quite right,

No more know I of this vile business,
 Than that this forged writing found its way
 Into my inner office, there I first
 Knew of the matter, then my daughter read,
 And whilst in very act of reading, we
 Were here (but now,) *by thee and thine arous'd.*

BARTO.

The Gods forbend I should be party to
 Such rude unchristian acts! I fain would rate
 Thy sterling friend: Behold a present proof
 This damning note I'll rend!

BLANCHE.

No, no, kind sir,

To much you hazard by so brave an act!
 Aloof from jeopardy in our behalf
 Thou canst well keep and still our friendship earn:
 For hast thou not already offered up
 Thy oath'd allegiance? And will yet allow
 A good intention to mislead thy sense
 In further bootless service for our loves.
 By the destruction of this paper, which
 Was scanned from end to end by that same man
 Who led the rabble thither; For our loves
 Thy first commanding word did borrow them,
 Never to be return'd.

FARRIET.

What sir, in words

May well express thy hold on me, I am
 Most grievously at fault;—The afterclap

(If such there ever be) must me resolve
And there enact what now I cannot speak.
And good daughter, thou hast ask'd to see
The fitting mazes of this wicked world;
See them thou shalt in all varieties,
From very lowest depth to highest height;
From thief's existence to a noble's life;
Aye, thou shalt have a panoramic view
Of all the golden splendors and mock shows,
That render up thy fantasy--the world.

BLANCHE.

Please, father, do bespeak me diff'rently !

FARRIET.

I would I were not able to denote thee--
That thy pure mother had as maiden died,
So my humility were left unshar'd !
On ! Jailer on, we tarry much too long !
Farewell, sweet child ! Kind daughter Blanche farewell !
No child was ever more affectionate,
Nor did unbidden offer more than thou,
Adieu, my sweetest only friend, adieu !

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Room in Palace, furnished with Secretary, etc.*
(CEDO and ANDREAS, encircled with Jurors, discovered.)

CEDO.

Friends, sirs, in all but this; had you pursued
A legal trend, as it doth sort you should,
We even now were friends, and one poor soul,
That through your insane verdict scarce hath time
To eye his fate and make his peace with God,
Were yet with loyal heart and honored age
Sweet liberty enjoying ; Whereas he dwells
In full anticipation of his death.
Upon a floor of stone, begirt with walls
The Cyclops hammer could not phase ; his bed
Of boards the soft side none can find, his stool
Repentance of an uncommitted crime.
O sirs ! how could you so mistake yourselves
As one unto the other weld your thoughts,
And yield in unison a verdict which
No more effects the case in hand, than doth
The highway's fork affect the river's mouth ?

1ST JUROR.

Being sworn in we were in honor bound,
Our verdict to deliver as the batch

Of witnesses deposed. How then could we
(If so we will'd) another verdict give?

CEDO.

Yes! Yes! Ye don the form of justice, yet
The spirit lags and ye'll not tarry for't!
All evidence educ'd, commanded or
Enforced by cross-examination is
With equal poise received; The worth of him
Who testifies, the manner of his speech,
And manifold auxillaries that gauge
The weight and force of testimony, ye
Do pass unseen, and think ye truly act
The laws of justice,—She who is indeed
Blindfolded and possess'd of scales. O, men!
Where were your better parts when you pronounc'd
So harsh a sentence for so cade a show
Of criminal intention? Could it be—
That you—But no, I must awhile withhold
What I should say.

ALL—

Eh?

CEDO—

Good sirs, adieu.
(*Exit CEDO*).

1ST JUROR.

My fellow jurors, it doth stand us well
To hear but few expressions of this tone;
Indeed, methinks the safer course would be,
To hie us earshot hence, lest by a slip
Some of our number may themselves commit
And lay all liable.

2ND JUROR.

'Tis well propos'd,

And touches near our thrift, to ruminate
How best to part and whither; Another put
In such a key as was the former part
Of this well earned censure, I had leak'd
The dregs of goodness I yet own, and spilt
This goodly number all to scaffold drops.
Think then how frail uncertain is our course,
When we do daily such assailments brave,
As our best reason tells us must betime
Extort an inadvertent self confession.

1ST JUROR.

To Havre then I do propose we sail,
And from there severally go to ports
Whence we (if need) may here be quickly summon'd.
How is it friends, do we in this agree?

ALL—

Yea! Yea!

ANDREAS.

Then hence with expedition go!
About the court will I remain, and post
You speedily on what may yet befall
The working of our plan. So, now, away!
Lo—where the worthy Barto comes, and he
(More like a woman than a man) is of
Such tender facile ways, he would ill brook
A jury late employ'd in such gross kind.

1ST JUROR.

Come haste' we to embark; I would not be
Encounter'd so again, for thrice the fee
Our services command.

(*Exeunt all but ANDREAS*).

ANDREAS.

Thus will a word

Emboss'd with knotty ifs and counter buts,
Seduce the safest upright man who treads
The portals of the court; Forsooth, poor fools,
To give the lie is often to withhold the truth,
And yield its zemblance, So thy promis'd fee
Insured thee stable footing in the court;
This shall ye have, until the hangman come
And claim ye for the crossroads; (*Enter Barto followed by Cedo,*
who hides himself.) which is when
Ye strive to clog the axle whereon revolves
Our wheel of fortune. Ah! Most timely met—

BARTO.

So do thy looks foretell;—If by an eye
(The bright forerunner of the mind's tumult,)
We may be judge of what is there contained,
Ye should have merry news; Out, then retail!
What 'tis that furrows so thy youthful face
And makes thy very aspect clownish like,
With saving of a pent-up tale!

CEDO (*aside*.)

Out pen!

May Heaven guide my hand!

ANDREAS.

Think then ye have

The sweetest harmony the fates devise
Twixt mankind and an earthly enterprise,
The jury which you bid me to beguile
With visions of a phantom purse, did smile
And wonder I (who had such fearful night,)
Should seek to buy, what they through fright
Would be too apt in charity to give.
Thereon the foreman spoke, as 'twere to sieve
The thoughts of all,—thus did he spurt himself—

"We are no friends of Farriet, nor is his pelf
 More to us than the treasures of the moon,
 Being so well inurn'd it were as soon
 By us acquired: On the other line
 Courtly preferment's sibyls shine
 In augury most truthful; Which you choose
 Of these two courses, must the other lose:
 Shall Mammon's golden messenger now flit—
 Or shall the life of Farriet be quit?"

The answer made you did on ent'ring guess;
 But matter appertaining, which doth press
 As close as will allow a leader lead,
 You yet have not surmis'd. If you can feed
 (Without disgorging on a stomach stock'd,)
 Some food I have within my larder lock'd,
 That is most pleasing to your palate;
 As we go farther on I will relate.

(*Exeunt.*)

(*Forward CEDO, with paper in hand.*)

CEDO.

Thus far—nor more beyond must I be led.
 The day's well on, the hour draws nigh, when this
 The voucher of a fortnight's vigil must;
 Be clear reflected in my master's eye.
 Poor sight! An eyesore sure to scholar'd minds;
 A schoolboy's essay smoother reads; A howl
 From deck to topmast choicer language has

* * * * *

O, for a poet's pen, to this abridge
 And set to music of the ducal strain!
 As't spells—"Dock's in,—Dock's out,—Dock came,—Dock went."
 A record plain of facts, which I have bulg'd
 (On strength of lame deducements I had drawn,)
 To such outlandish size, it seems I've drown'd
 An unborn being in a dry millpond!

(*Enter DUKE and attendants. CEDO gathers up papers.*)

DUKE.

I would be now alone.

(*Exeunt attendants.*)

Stay; Cedo, is
 The task I late commanded you discharg'd?

CEDO.

What little substance legs could track,
 And my poor wit contain, herein you'll find inscrib'd.
 What is embellish'd look you is the truth
 No less for its adornment; There be some
 Could make a foot of news, where I an inch
 Can scarce eke out; notwithstanding I
 Have used my best endeavors 'gainst the fault.

(*Enter Page.*)

DUKE. How now? (*To Page.*)

PAGE.

The prisoner's daughter waits, and craves immediate audience.

DUKE. Bid her to home!

CEDO. One moment, you. (*To Page.*)

My liege (with bended knee
And inner-soul so pityingly wrought
In this recall, the force of surface seem
Howe'er so strongly posed could not o'ermatch,) I do enjoin you by the writ you hold,
(Yet stay the reading,) either to rescind
Your order on this maid, or here erewhile
Endure thy page, whilst you may suffer through 't.

DUKE.

Rise, brother; rather work in bold command
Than grovel in supplication, when
The mitigation is derived of us.
What! is our friendship held in such repute
That life's demotic courtesies are stopp'd,
Unless poor suers ye to us extend,
The manner of your prayers! Friend, be you
Our criered messenger; Impart thy will
An' if it run athwart our very life
We'll not deny! (*Nods to page, who exits.*)

CEDO.

Then thus I do advise—
That you allow this maid a hearing, and
If she should chide, to bear the chiding as,
You in a joke the victims' grumbling weigh.

DUKE.

Enough! I ~~will~~ ^{will} anticipate your charge,
And will its wants most zealously attend.
Go you, escort the daughter here, and then
Put in completion what you have begun,
For yet in embryo it is, when see
The jailbirds are unhatch'd.

(*Exit CEDO.*)

Of all that's crude,
This is the crudest! Done; when scarce begun,
Yet wearing in the germ! But to my chore,—
How shall I here confront this maid? What talk
May she that I with glibness cannot meet?
Should she my judgment rail or here discourse
In broad virago mouthings, I could find
In balking her a childish pleasantry;—
But should she come in virgin modesty,
Her tongue within her quest, I then must act
A false beseeching which in forethought is.

(*Enter* BLANCHE.)

Too harsh for sound reflection. Now she comes.—
And as the northern frosts make greatest show
On southern sides, in sunny time I'll shady be.

(*Busies himself with papers, with back to* BLANCHE.)

Well,—fair intruder, what may I for you?

BLANCHE.

Most gracious lord,—what need have I for words
To break the object of my visit here?—
Too well you know the motive or if not
Turn here thy gaze, and if you see
No answer for my coming, I will say
I sue to be denied.

DUKE (*aside.*) (Ye gods! how sweet!
Can human larynx pour such dulcet rhythm
Into the ear of man uncharm'd? O, no!
If she be fashion'd as her tongue gives note,
I am about face with an angel sure!
Be yea or nay the premises, I am
To turn and face her with severity.)
Come you (as do the many,) to pervert
The staid impartial working of our law?

BLANCHE.

Nay! Nay! So well my father did instill
The spirit of our statute, I could plead,
No more for him if guilty, than I could
Deforce you of him were his crime most patent!
But as intuitively I do know,—
(Aye, by all trips that warrant fact,)
He is in fealty so staunch, his mind
Did never harbor rebel thought, I'd break
My wind in urging his behalf!

DUKE.

The law

Was open to recourse, and he the means
To have the best of legal talent had.

BLANCHE.

O! Sir, it boots me not to know the wake
Of haps to me and mine, self-evident,
Yet not to be averted. Sir, have you
Not heard of men so loose in morals, they
Would traffic with their oaths? Oh, I have read
In Christian works of such! May it not chance
The like of this is here embodied? Think.—
How weak the truth, how strong the lie; when 'tis
A man not well in public favor tried.

DUKE.

Silence! Ill-mannered and ungrateful maid!
Has here the court upon probation sat
With you as judge of judges? Now beshrew
Thy mode of playing! When thou seest I lean
To suit thy hurt, thou actst the pampered child;
But when thou seest there yet remain a cut
(Which I in pity must descant,) you swerve
The weight of argument and prate along,
As though I ne'er had spok'n.

BLANCHE.

Oh, you so great!

So noble! Wise! Discreet! can ye not tell
Betwixt a mock and true? How shall I act
If not as now? If other ways there be
That swifter move the tender faculties,
I know them not; My way a simple child's,
Who craves a father's life and that but half,
For he hath scarce the power of a leg.

DUKE.

Enough! By highest known tribunal was
Thy father tried and guilty proven,—more—
His late accusers are my safest friends
And men whom I well know.

BLANCHE.

Well know! my lord!

Know you what 'tis to *know a man in full*?
Is it to be his better or in state
So well intrench'd his fear is of thy love,
His pleasure of thy sport, his bread, thy bounty?
Nay! Nay! To probe the depth of friendship, you
Must have a lack of what's his plenty and
Your need most sore—and out of favor be
Yea minus all that makes men idolized,
And rather sets them in the way of scorn;
He then who takes thy many blows himself,—
Who damps thy parched lips,—Who stays thy ill
Or will assauge the pain, though't pain himself;—
Who spills thy cup of grief e'er it o'erflows
Though by the spilling he were drown'd in woe;—
He then befriends and is the man you know;
All others rank acquaintances and wait
The trial of a doubt. Have then thy friends
Their well acknowledged sorting with thyself
Earn'd by the threading of this thorny path?
Oh, sir! Have they unto thyself shown aught,
That you should deem their breath infallible?

DUKE.

Give way! I have some show of temper, girl,

'Twere best you put not in the contra way!

BLANCHE.

Why then, to me, did you the court forbid?
 Ah, had you not withheld that privilege,
 By dint of truth I'd make them own the lie,
 Before 'twas uttered, confound their tongues
 And make each tell a sep'rate tale, so free
 And foreign to a smooth connection, they
 Would cravenly denounce their mouths as false!
 Oh, sire! Be merciful! A king in title,
 Not in heart;—A fearful giant in might,
 Not in acts;—Oh turn ye not so coldly!—
 Give me sweet heed,—forget the while you are
 A mighty ruler whom the world demands
 Shall be of cold and haughty temperament!
 Let nature sway, and respite give to him .
 Who most unjustly is condemned to death!

DUKE.

(*Aside*) Oh perfidy! to plague so pure a soul!

BLANCHE.

Have you no answer, sire?—or may I hope
 Thy lack of speech portends a sweet reply?

DUKE.

You girl! Dissemble! What an ear I have
 To heed your prattle, justice will be done,—
 Begone! I will reflect your argument.

BLANCHE.

Heaven bless you! my lord, I'll not forget
 To name you in my prayers.

(*Exit.*)

DUKE.

Oh, linger still!—

Nay, go sweet maid, and yet I'd have thee stay,
 Though you should chide the while; La! I would have
 Thee weeks a chiding e're I'd tell thee go,
 Could I but mask my visage which did bend
 A'most to breaking at each searching word,
 That you most righteously gave utterance!
 Methinks thou hast about this spot diffused
 A holy atmosphere, whose purity
 Pervading all, hath so transported me,
 My spirit soars in ecstasy!—Oh saint
 Thou wert not wrought for this cold world,—those eyes—
 Were made to view celestial sights,—those ears—
 To harken heav'nly strains,—those dainty feet
 To pace a road this earth doth not afford.
 Sweetheart ye do remind me of a one
 That I (save in a fancy,) ne'er beheld,—

An angel mother! Ah! who so well knows her
 As he who hath her not, And you do seem
 Her very picture, loving, gentle, kind,
 Thy soul engross'd, thy heart enlisted in
 A pure and holy cause, a saint-like task—
 The saving of a harden'd father's life!
 A father!! What if here a lover were,
 And I—that he? Ye gods! a happy thought!
 Why not act on't? She is incarnate and
 She may be won! All hail the theme! Yet if
 Her fond affections I do now enchain,
 I win her not, for she doth woo a man
 More great than I, yet he excels not me;
 And I, Alack! must by intrinsic worth be won.
 Yes, yes! She shall be fairly wooed, and I
 For what I am be won! (*Rings bell.*)
 (*Enter PAGE.*)

Send hither he
 Who stands committed,—let none other come
 Till I have pass'd a word with good friend Cedo! (*Exit PAGE.*)
 What may be done, to him will I impart,
 For there be none so mete as he, to share
 The burthen of my newborn thoughts.
 (*Enter CEDO.*)

CEDO.

My lord!

DUKE.

Come nigher, friend, I have a thing to say
 I would not trumpet to the world; Step close;—
 Be not so formal, it doth wear you ill
 When in our lone companionship. The time
 (With you,) for cringing, bolts, when state affairs
 Are pass'd, and vulgar eyes no longer look
 To such as thee for precedents. Look you,—
 Within this hour and day most strange I'll act,
 Things now apparent, yea on the tapis will
 Right suddenly be chang'd; What seems most like
 Is not to be; The snake his skin has shed
 And strangely donn'd another, In short the writ
 You have of late compiled, was by me known,
 E're it was penn'd. Looks not this strange, good friend?
 Yet this a much too tame precursor is,
 To signal that's to follow,—but anon,—
 That now I would apprise thee of, is this—
 What in the eye of many odd appears,
 Take you as 'twere no hap unusual,
 And render it a fact anticipated;
 Let naught nonplus, nor let your mien change,
 Though I do set thee proxy to myself
 And fare thee well forever!

CEDO. Good, my lord,
You do command but little, yet you do
Assign by far beyond my worth!

DUKE. Trust me,
I stake no more in chance than fact has prov'd;
So is the measure if I choose you stead me,
It shall be your best pleasure to comply.

CEDO.
Be you assur'd I'll strive.

DUKE. Nay that's the doing!—
Haste' you and prod the jailer here.

CEDO. My lord,
He is without, and comes this way along
With Farriet in chains, and mobb'd about
With courtiers; Mongst the morbid crowd
I do espy Andreas to Barto link'd,
Right closely followed by the foreman juror.

DUKE (*aside*). (Ah! 'tis truly said—" *Ther're bonds as strong
Twixt lowborn knaves, as purest virtue boasts.*"

(*Enter* BARTO, ANDREAS, FARRIET—COURTIER, etc.)

Now will I take of devil's text a lease,
Wherewith I may a goodly saw express,
Stand here the pris'ner! What! Is this the he
Who at defiance sets our law, who reeks
A breath defensive whiles he gives
His purse and pen unto the vile offenders?
Had I no proof 'bove sight I'd say,—he hath
No sign of danger on him.

FARRIET. Spare, my lord!
This with'ring vim! My scope of life were short
E're this sad hap befell, but since, God wot,
It hath no length, for thou dost kill it by
Harsh words in kindly setting.

1st COURTIER. What a taste
His honor hath for tender usage! Why—
He shies his bolt as he were judge,
And we a band of sinners for his clemency!

FARRIET.
Oh Heav'nly Host! Will this my suff'rance be!
To be the butt for jester's gall?

2d COURTIER.
Why old Centrifugal! How you do fly
From off your center! Look you now, he'll have
Us felloes to a lightning-hub
And wheel us quickly on to Beelzebub!

FARRIET.

Avaunt! Ye double damn'd scourgers! Damn'd!
For holding of a caste unearn'd! Damn'd!
Misusing thus! Go spend thy flippancy
Upon thy aged parents whom I take
Are more deserving!

DUKE (*aside*). Grave unerring conscience,
True umpire of the soul, give me in sin
A feint, that I distemper may affect
And meanly use, what most I do revere!

FARRIET.

If it be fair in question, give me, sire,
Solution of my new arraignment here;
Will not thy pass at justice be appeas'd,
'Till that each vulgar minded courtier has,
With bitter taunting irony assail'd
The pris'ner's sense?

DUKE. Out of custom this,
So is thy crime, hence is this license bred;
Which to subdue, thyself art hither brought.
Deliver me opinions of thyself
That have not this prescription, then 'twill cease.

FARRIET.

I am no fond declaimer, I,—My art,
No art, concealing manlike attributes,
Enlarging viciousness,—my error is
In rigid truth, which at its best deludes.
For what I should pronounce, I can but say,—
Ev'ry man hath his way, and mine, my lord,
Hath color none, save that I shift not with
The common klan, nor do I strive to see
With all men's eyes, and therefore am I scorn'd,
Aye scoff'd and jeered, when lauded I should be!
Child! Boy! Thy father's call to arms
Did ever find a ready soldier here!
Not one bell toned that made his deeds his boast!
But of the few who staid their leader by
And when the cause was lost,—thy father dead,—
This fair land by the vile usurper ruled,—
His ideal being would no longer give
Assurance to the ducal pow'r, but grew
Into the woe engend'ring life I lead!
Good sir! My speech I hope doth not entreat!
If so, 'tis much against my will; Albeit
My life is forfeit; You have but to name
The moment of my send-off and 'tis done!

DUKE.

With thee, thy daughter then, hath found no thought?

FARRIET.

Why lift me from the willing throes of hell,
To blast me with a heavenly flash and sour
My resignation! Hath my woe no mete?
Oh, sire! If you do ever seek to wear
An age as great as mine, let but thy mind
Conceive its woes compounded in a one,
And this at once upon thee thrown, when thou
Against art least insured, then thou wilt feel
A pang less keen than now writhes me. My soul!
Have thought on her? Ye Gods, dumb strike me if
I unalloyed a thought beget that she
Claims not! Aye all is hers! So kind! so pure!
Inapt at sinfulness, such moral pride,—
So much a girl,—so near a goddess,—she—
A child immortal God-like paradigm—
Not of this world in that she passeth sin.
My lord—say you no more,—do that you should,
Not make me to myself subordinate.
If needs thou makest pastime of mine ill
Do crack thy bubble from another sud.

DUKE.

Thou art indeed well favored in thy child;—
And pity 'tis, some loyal spark of her
Were not infus'd in thy rebellious ways!
Right royally she sued disloyally,
And hath prevailed, insomuch thou art free
To go thy ways 'till that the court shall find
An evidence more tenable;—Meanwhile
Within thy house (in state's behalf,) I'll lodge
Some trusty servant who shall access have
To thee and thy belongings; Further thou
Shall certify a bond in all thy worth:
Wilt thou then think upon the proposition?

FARRIET.

My lord, I humbly thank thee and accept.

DUKE.

Release the prisoner! Give him redress,
See you he hath a safe conveyance home.
Have yet our messengers of war return'd?

(Exit FARRIET, GUARDS, etc.)

PAGE.

My lord, they are at hand awaiting ca 1,

DUKE.

Tell us how our advances were received,
Do they embrace a peace?

1st MESSENGER.

My lord, we scoured

From line to line the country round, and saw
No head, to whom we might impart our charge,
That we discovered new is of such form,
'Twere lost in the expressing, implied, it tells
Most treasonous. Our simplest questions met
Equivocating answers; none who knew
Would help us as we'd speed, and so we come
To have fresh order.

DUKE.

Aye, and speedily!

Methinks there shall a war be toward that
Will make the bravest of them quail! 'Tis strange
What pow'r's in this Lelievriere that he
At flashing notice can an army raise,
To steep us in abeyance! Back, you!
Who lately failed your mark! And if you bring
A second answer that will tell as this,
Know then thou wert as good as dead! Begone!
Mouth our intent as you do know it;—Fetch
Some show of answer or thy head shall pay
The forfeit of thy lack! Thriving province ours,

(Exit MESSENGER.)

Environed on our landed outskirts with
Harrassing bandits; On our sea girt ply
Unnumbered smugglers who now drug our mart
With slavish foreign wares, while native skill
Doth beg a living patronage; This must,
Aye, shall no longer be! If leniency
Receives a cold 'reception, we shall try
A cruel warlike plan. As I did wrest
This land from those who wrong'd my father, so
Will I, (if needs;) as sanguinary, part for part,
Maintain it to our usages! And now—
Wise councilors and else, I do resign
Mine office for a time, and relegate
All pomp appurtenant and duty to
Our trusty servant, Cedo, he it is
Will rule, advise you, (pending our return.)
Henceforth his word is law! Know all, by noon
I must be found, nonest, a traveler
Outside my realm; In search of health that man,
The passer-by may say, and you who know
May then (as 'twere upon authority)
Affirm his lonely plodding, as a scent
Upon a track of health, or better you

May say—he is a man whom duty found
Off duty; like unto the archer who
Did ever fail his mark till that he aimed
Directly contrawise.

BARTO. Is't well, my lord,
In such grave time, with treason, rampant and
Grim war at hand, thy office shall be left
With head and font, a novice, whose support
Thou dost so meagrely define?

DUKE. Why friend,
Hath he not here good councilors? In case
Of haps emergent, hath he not you and these?
Good-honest fellows all, upright and leal;
Whose only thought, apparent, is our law
Upheld most rigidly. Wherefore do you
In morals so divinely hedg'd, secure
In money'd wealth and friends, seek to forestall
Such dire improbabilities?

ANDREAS (*aside to BARTO*). Beware!
He strokes thee down too fondly; I do think
He means to rub thy fur the contra way!

DUKE.
Friend, Andreas,—Thou no lesser christian light,
Than he thy consort, see thou bear'st him out
And with the rest a unit for our weal.

ACT III.

SCENE I. *Apartment in FARRIET'S house.*
(*Enter BLANCHE meditating.*)

BLANCHE.
Thus have I been lighthearted ever, yet
The pleasing buoyancy of careless joy,
Of innocence so redolent, hath not
The smack exquisite, nor the bitter sweet,
That here confronts and arbitrarily
Enlists me in this newborn bliss; How short
The days that realize this joy, how brief
The nights these beauteous visions paint;—Ah me!
All nature hath digress'd, and now presents
Her ripe and most engaging side. Methinks
My plants, of late, a sweeter odor have;
The air more bracing seems; The jibes and knocks
To me, and mortals all attendant, now
Grate not so harshly on mine ear; Yet with
Mine ecstasy comes there a fault along,
That savors much of harlotry; So deep
An easy conscience doth accuse me, I
Do redden at the thought, yet will I on

And gloze a present sin, a past to cloak.
 Ah, yes! a harlot I, as great as she
 Who vends her graces on the public mart!
 Did I not give the Duke (unsought,) my love?
 His image keep in sacred enshrinement?
 And foster, (hoydenlike,) a craving love,
 To foist it on the next available?
 The love, I fain would have, and that
 I presently may own, cojointly hold
 In even strain, not bating former love,
 To help a love existent? Shame! Oh, shame!
 Most cruel shame, that crimsons so my cheek?—
 Proclaims I may not entertain two loves,
 Yet will not help me to renounce the one,
 Nor with the other cloy me. Blest am I,
 In that I do reciprocate a love;
 Accurst am I, for it my prayers will not
 (In purity sincere,) be voic'd to heav'n.
 A hypocrite they vote me, since I seem
 In wickedness to thrive most happily;—
 So continuing, solace will I take
 From warpt philosophy adapted to
 My special want; as in extraction of a thorn,
 Attending pain gives zest to subsequent relief,
 I will so lose myself, as oft to think
 With sharpest thorns I'm deeply prick'd; whereas
 My woes's all joy, yea, all that is, is joy,
 And I, most joyful fond exponent of this joy,
 Thrive wickedly to further consummate.
 Oh why, hath Heaven made me so illform'd,
 That I for wrong will hunger, and have not
 (Seek how I will,) a virtue's countercheek!
 (*Enter ADELAIDE (hastily).*)

ADELAIDE.

Oh, Blanche! Your ear a tale I have to tell,
 Which, if I longer keep, will kill!
 So mark,—The worthy Cedo hath to-day
 Made manifest for me, a love, which I
 Too long have sweetly guess'd, but now 'tis set,
 And look you,—hence ne'er meet me, but expect
 The dread affliction of society,—
Accepted lover! Let this ever be,
 When that I lack of speech or speak too great,
 Or seem distraught or tender no reply,
 Excusing adequate to clear my name,
 Which ever shall be friend for thee. But list,
 I'm furnish'd with some other news, at once
 Both comical and sad; Sad it is,
 In that 'tis coupled with thy pretty self,

Most laughable it is, to thus presume.
 My! how my sides with laughter ached when
 Lord Andreas did his tale recite, of how
 His eye at diff'rent times had seen Delmot
 With thee too closely in communion knit;
 And furthermore, a heed (said he,) thou giv'st
 Unto this flat Delmot, which none may get
 Howe'er so well deported; This and more
 Did he present to make thy father know,
 What he already knew, that thou wert pair'd
 With poor Delmot; Oh, I could scarce restrain
 My eager tongue, nor think how best direct!
 Ah, well, in thy defense 'twas warmly us'd,
 Of that rest well assur'd; Oh I did show
 The inconsistence of his yarn, the lack
 Betwixt you pair of close affinity.
 Then most indignantly did I compare
 Shortcomings of thy swain!—

BLANCHE.

Soft, Adelaide!—

ADELAIDE.

Hath he, (said I,) a virtue fit to mate
 With thy most faulty act?

BLANCHE.

Oh, Adelaide!

ADELAIDE

Nay rate Delmot in form or tone or wealth,
 Combined thrèble value in excess
 An hundred fold, still would he have
 Not grace enough to be thy lackey!

BLANCHE.

Hold!

I cry you mercy, friend! Counts it a sin
 Adonis' mirror's not Delmot's physique?
 Loves man his mother less when nature hath
 Been sparing with her niceties? Or when
 The lapse of years her kindly face doth set
 In honorable wrinkles? Come tell me,—
 Is poverty enforc'd iniquitous?—
 Hold'st thou a friendship in such tenure as
 To vacillate as will its owner's wealth?
 No, dearest friend, thou wilt not smirch my love;
 Thou dost but tease me; even now design,
 To rouse the ire of love, whereby thou mayest
 Perceive a sweet reflection of thy mind,
 Which being freshly burden'd of its love,
 Hath pressing incitation to observe
 The literal enactment.

ADELAIDE.

Must I then

Believe mine eyes that followed thee so well

Askance have look'd ! Discerning lost ! That thou .
 From aspirations of a ducal love
 Thy love so low could prostitute ? Ah ! thou
 Hast grievously deceiv'd ; which in return
 To swell our mutual endearments, I
 Applaud as thou wilt love,—When 'tis a Duke
 I'll say 'tis well, being beyond thy reach,—
 When base or lowly born,—why better then,
 Since thou wouldst not abase thyself, and best
 When such another as my love, (a man
 Of all that man's a man, component), thou
 May'st (in delusive vagaries of luck)
 Chance on a next to him in cleverness.

BLANCHE.

Be not so cruel, Ada, he I love
 Hath all that Heav'n may bless a mortal with !
 I would none other, give me joy of him ;—
 Not seek by peurile scorn, the hope to pall,
 That all my amatory tenderings,
 Shall meet in him a love responsive. Bah !
 He did but smile, and I that smile construed
 Into a love design, and when he spoke,
 Refined modulations of his speech,
 So wrought upon my feelings, I did take
 The commonplace accosting due our sex,
 To be as Cupid's challenge ; So have I
 Resolved a love reciprocal of naught.
 Begott'n from sweet conceits a fruitful fact,
 No ! No ! Ada ! Thus doth it stand,—Delmot
 Hath not address'd me other than as one
 Might speak unto a sister, it was I
 Who unabash'd oft forc'd my blushings and
 All else betok'ng love. Have pity then
 For one that hath a clean divided heart,
 A false and true that alternate as days
 And men will pass.

ADELAIDE.

Indeed, dear Blanche, thou art

Too scathing of thyself ! For I do know
 Thou art too modest, shy and diffident,
 For common good ; Thou wouldst not woo unwooed ;
 The Duke with kindness woo'd, perchance an eye
 Of yearning bent on thee, which thou (so new,)
 Receiv'd at par ; This should you not ; for men
 Will smile and smirk and nod and wink, and you
 A passive doll accepting, will evolve
 A leal off'ring from a false intent.
 Now, by the moral sway of Cupid, I
 Some dozens have encounter'd such as this,

And found it passing sport ! To some, a smile,
 A willful frown to others, then a look
 Most tearful or caressing, as the gauge
 Of him opposing did prefer;—yet here,
 A Christian, heartwhole, with a virgin love,
 Gives greeting unto Cedo !—Come with me,
 I have a school of lessons few,
 Wherein is taught what you should do;
 And profit you or profit not,
 The issue is a happy lot.

(*Exeunt.*)

(*Enter ANDREAS, BARTO and CEDO.*)

ANDREAS.

To war were better than dishonor'd peace !
 To paint white black, is well, but then to build
 A lofty structure on that base,—my lords
 Let me be honest !

CEDO.

So acts of the wise

The veriest fool may aptly criticize,
 Till puff'd up with opinionated points,
 His hearers by contagion are infected,
 Imbibing erudition of the fool,
 Which subsequent reflection proves a nill,
 Let us then be chary and eschew
 The vision (universal,) which doth set
 Each sev'ral living man (whate'er his lot,)
 To be the leader of a little world,
 Whose canton scope is as his senses may
 Find opportunity and fancied wit
 To cope withal: Remember all may mar
 But few can make; Respect originals;
 Be not a wind iconoclast; Bark not
 The tree that gives thee shade; Best you would shirk
 The self-imposed duties of your tongues;
 Transpose alleged wisdom into truth;
 And loudly praise his eccentricity.
 Ah, Sirs: to found a clever critic, takes
 Small quantity of wit; A trade for which
 Most men assume a special aptitude.

ANDREAS.

Come, Cedo, now you do enlarge upon
 Our little speech; We did comment and times
 Do countenance the act; Certain it is
 The Duke (by odd manipulation,) has
 Invited comments Pro and Con, the which
 We have most charitably entertain'd.
 In that he has some score of smugglers seiz'd
 And that Jean Lelievriere is routed, we

BARTO.

Accurst be he and all that follow in
The ducal wake! My influence methought
Was all sufficient to effectuate
The prompt deposing of this Delmot and
Instating of thy self! Yet now it seems
'Tis something short of naught! Didst note Cedo
With all his loud exclaiming nothing said?
“*His entertainment lacks instruction!*” So the moon
Forsooth! may lack direction since 'tis prone
To many changes; yet no mortal can
Avail him aught by striving to control;
So with Delmot, in his appointment here

Omnipotent, sits even as the Duke
And may not then as easily be led.

ANDREAS.

Since then, we know our vantage elsewhere lies,
Let us within and new suggestings seek,
Wherewith to found a new procedure; Come—
Upon our laggard heels misfortunes tag,
Dire menaces until our game we bag!

SCENE 2.—*Grounds about Farriet's house.*

(*Enter DUKE, in disguise; BLANCHE discovered laughing and chattering in the distance with her maid.*)

DUKE.

Where link'd with beauty bodes a finer mind?
Where group'd in nature's masterpiece more grace
From Heav'n mirror'd? Angel! Woman! First
My pulse to move this happy measure, first
My wicked self to re-create! And now
(Since thou the gauntlet of a cruel test
Too well have sped,) will I withdraw and woo
As more befits thy desert to be woo'd.
Ah! how the rasping words in latitude
Of common speech, in glowing colors paint
Her lily cheeks! Much like the lash of guilt
Upon the spotless back of innocence.
A virgin fit the greatest king to mate
With beauty, wit and all else integrate.

(*Duke assumes a pensive attitude.*)

(*Exit maid; forward BLANCHE.*)

BLANCHE.

Art ill, my friend, that dull dejection takes
A hold so gruesome?

DUKE.

Ill? Aye, ill indeed
As he who hath disease incurable.
What fleshly pain as keen, incisive, as
Hypocrisy of thought? To clash the mind
(Whose umpirage religiously directs,)
With thought on thought most sensual, incite
The passive body to a mean imposture?

BLANCHE.

Sir, rather do I think thy searching sense
Doth magnify some mite and merge it in
A woeful sin.

DUKE.

Come, charming censor, tell
How thou cans't so diverge in judgment from
Thy father, mentor, friends and those who deign
My execrable moves to arbitrate?

BLANCHE.

My father's hate, (albeit much misprised,) Hath great occasion; Then as moon to sun Will fawning friends their borrow'd lustre lend In lesser hates on thee,—

DUKE (*attempting a caress.*) And you, fair one, Wilt thou not here resolve me? Render true Thy wonted estimate?

BLANCHE. This can I not,—
Or may not if I could,—Beseech you!
Let me indoors! I've naught to say,—Kind sir!
I pray you—hold me not—my tongue is lost!
No speech have I that boots thee to attend!

DUKE.

Sweet! Glint thine eyes but so, and sweeter speech
Can human lips not frame, nor can be found
A list'ner more intense than he who heeds!
Fair siren, may I be so bold, so vain,
Sweet, to impart here have we each for each
A treasure infinite, enriching both.
Be thou the magnet to my steel, and gain
By giving of thy power; Wilt thou be
As high exalted as adoring man
May couch a worthy woman? Wilt thou wive
A man inferior, yet of a heart
Immaculate, that throbs for none but thee?

BLANCHE.

I know not how to answer since I think
Much more than thou dost crave thou dost bestow;
Yet if thou wilt and thinkst not to repent,—

DUKE.

So will I never do,—or doing die!

(*They retire.*)

(*Enter CEDO and ADELAIDE.*)

ADELAIDE.

'Twere folly thus to woo,—have ye no saws
To send a wooing of a cuter text?
Thou lov'st me truly, aye, 'tis stale and raw!
Thou wouldst and couldst most valiantly, but don't;
Ah! If I were a man prerogativ'd
No maid who so invitingly presents,
Would have her wants unsated! I would have
A clasping arm, a shelt'ring breast, a lip
Continuously kissing; see beyond

(*Looking at DUKE in distance*)

Where goes the humblest, yet withal most wise,
Who will inhale his bud when scarce 'tis plucked.

Doth not his arm encompass her? Why, sure!
 Else hath he been dismember'd? Quick! Retire!
 Lest we be hued with shame; for by his way
 I think he means to kiss. My! Sour grapes
 Did ever make me qualmish!

CEDO. Wouldst thou have
 A hugging bear, a kissing dove? Then so —
 And so,—(*kissing*) with animal endearments I
 Herewith begin a never-ending role!

ADELAIDE.

Ah, poor in quality is the response
 Of love too long solicited! It hath
 The merit of originality.
 For never did I hear of love that lack'd
 The fiery germ of spontaneity!

CEDO.

If depth of love by blandishments is shown,
 Henceforth a love most obvious thou'lt own.
 Spasmodic and paroxysmal I'll be,
 Loose-jointed ever with a pray'rful knee.
 No scowling frowns, no venom'd stares, all smiles;
 The very prince himself of cupid's wiles.
 With sighs at times, then tears, and all between
 Diffusing love's quintessence beauteous queen.
 (*Forward BLANCHE and DUKE.*)

(*Exeunt.*)

DUKE.

It is my lack doth so embolden me,
 Were I more richly favor'd, of a form
 Less hideous, thus much would I not urge.

BLANCHE.

Why should I linger on't when you would know?
 'Twas then,—The Duke, I lov'd! Why laugh you not?

DUKE.

This moves me not to mirth; All subjects should
 Show loyal love.

BLANCHE. In sooth they should, yet mine;—
 Kind sir,—shame me no further to confess!

DUKE.

Sweet! 'Tis the keen delight of love, to hear
 These fond confessings; Tell me of this love,—
 Was't like to mine?

BLANCHE. E'en so, a tender bud,
 A struggling undeveloped flower, though
 The rip'ning would I fear, had you not stay'd

The random growth and grafted sweeter fruit.

DUKE.

'Tis well to be a second if the first
Be dead, and third doth follow not in train.
Yet of this duke, thy love (if that he would,)
I like him not, and much annoyed am I
To know he has bestirred thy virgin heart.

BLANCHE.

How like the duke thou seem'st when speaking thus!
In feature, voice, expression, so in kind
I cannot well distinguish! Aye in truth
Had nature used thee kindly, I could swear
Thou wert his very image!

DUKE.

What! A duke

Of pigmy stature, and a camel's back?
Of microscopic brain? Of dwarfish wit?
Astute discernor! Well dost thou collate
When say'st thou he doth me resemble!

BLANCHE.

I would not have thee so detract; Be true,
My love in all, nor abnegate a grace
By both in common held, lest I be bowed
By shamed humility; For as the duke
Did, as the lightning's corruscating stroke
Flash heav'nly fire into my sleeping heart,
Awaken fond desires, delicious thoughts,
Enrancing dreams and pleasing discontents,
And as thou art in body, mind and all
His other self, his true continuer,
I needs must loyal be, whiles you no more
He, (which art thyself,) will derogate.

DUKE.

Why truly, thou art of the gentler sex
A gem, a true exponent, to outface
Avow'd dissembling with such sweet debate.
Now come your ways, too long have you annoy'd.
Sweet work have I to keep those lips employed.

(Attempts kiss.)

BLANCHE.

Aye, wilt thou so, without some sharp rebuke!
Forbear! Nor dare parade me by the duke!
(Forward CEDO and ADELAIDE.)

(Exeunt.)

ADELAIDE.

Whoever saw a clucking hen to pick
Till that she scratched? Or farmer seek to reap
E're he had sown? Anticipation's guile

Averts reality, Thou wouldst affect
 The capers of a novice on the lute
 I do remember of, who would essay
 Profoundest musical effusions known,
 E're she the scale had mastered. Breathes the child
 Who will the dinner courses gorge,
 When close a savory dessert awaits?
 You, but a child, in love, must so be chid'n;
 Know then, to wear me tritely, woo you must!
 And that without incessant urging, too!

CEDO.

What if I brazenly will arrogate
 Fine qualities that ill befit: Cause you
 To think I am not I; Thrive in deceit;
 Assail thee with a tongue eclectic, true
 In seeming only; Or with boasts alike—

A man I know, who when the snow
 Lay thickly as a shield;
 'Tween suns I vow, criss cross could plough
 A full ten-acre field.

But when the blast of winter past,
 And summer heat the while,
 As sure as fate this man could skate
 A minute to a mile.

On desert dry, no water nigh,
 I'll truly say of him,
 Be mortal glad, if that he had
 An hundred miles to swim.
 But when on ship, his truthful lip
 'Twere pity to observe;
 Miles he could do, as seconds flew,
 Ah, me! He had a nerve!

Nay, suffer me to court thee honestly,
 That when conjugal love enjoying, we
 May yet have crowning virtues to reveal.

ADA.

Then be it so, yet, let it not appear
 My love is held too cheaply! Be alive
 To feelingly enact thy prompting thoughts
 And let me queen it o'er my fond domain!

CEDO.

Yea, on my neck, thy foot, a fond caress;
 So thou anon infracting love no less.

(Enter BARTO and ANDREAS.)

ANDREAS.

This is the very substance of the scheme,—
 Thou hast in swordsmanship no equal, save

(*Exeunt.*)

One lone exception, he, the duke; and as
This Delmot sports a warlike thigh, thou may'st
Find quick occasion to engage the skill
His dangling sword implies; Without a fear
But he'll be stuck as well as other hogs.

BARTO.

This sorts not well and ruins me in caste,
To cross a knightly sword with such as he.

ANDREAS.

Nay, cross it not! But lunge at him with point
Of deadly venom! Make a deal—defense—
As 'twere a quarrel forc'd—invited not!
Trust me to fend the honor of your steel,
By goading him till that his acts overt,
Thy pass will justify.

BARTO. Much cause have I
To wish him dead, yet murder suits me not!

ANDREAS.

Come, scan thee not thy mind so daintily,
Nor coin so harsh a word. He hath unlocked
The closest secrets of thy bosom, holds
The safest fort in action; charms a love
That else were yours, he being vanquished.
Say, shall he live? Live yet to tell the Duke
Thy fond confidings; by the which the bribes
Thou gavs't to him, will serve as vouchers for
A gauzy probity;—

(Enter Farriet.)

BARTO. No more, he dies!
I'll down all conscience 'tween me and the act!

ANDREAS.

Sh—! Farriet! Now closely by repair,
And hearken to his railing—here 'tis good.

(They retire to side hidden by trees.)

FARRIET.

What, solitude! Shall I luxuriate
In pensiveness and for the nonce have time
To bless me with an intervening? 'Tis
Most singular what hap hath now befall'n,
And clouds me much to question; Lo! 'tis gone!
The miracle quick wrought, illusion is!
For here my nêmesis, mine evil star.
Impatient eagerness personifies,
And strives to bask him in my seldom smile,
Which never yet were his.

(Enter DUKE.)

DUKE. Good morning, sir !

FARRIET.

'Twere knavish mockery to thus accost
With gentle salutation of the day,
When yet thine eye in watch perpetual
Hath disallow'd the warrant of salute !

DUKE.

It grieves me much, the service of my hire
Doth visit you unkindly; I would be
Well savoured to your liking, at this time,
If never so before, since now I come
In marriage way, to ask of thee thy child.

FARRIET.

Why, 'tis an ass that speaks ! Alike the child
That hunger'd for the moon ! Hence you to her !
Amazement so confounds me, in reply
I needs must be abusive ! Go, to her !
There will you get denial, sweet, refin'd
In cloaked repugnance; There refusal take
In sugar'd cadence; Pity if you will
For she is of such gentle disposition,
Grossest word of hers excels my best (Enter BLANCHE.)
In pleasuring the ear ! Stay you ! She comes !
(Aside) Why, here is not a child, but woman grown,
That rather may be led than driven !

BLANCHE. Sire,—

Why dost thou look so grave, and stare me so ?
Thou wilt not think I have outgrown thy love ?

(FARRIET caressing BLANCHE.)

FARRIET.

My child ! So even now, a very babe
That cooing in my rocking arms, was wont
To while relaxing hours; as like to Eve
And Adam, in our paradise; no sin,
No thought iniquitous. When, lo, appears
A wily serpent, sharp, seductive, which
(But little diff'ring from the Devil skinn'd,)
Comes in the form of man, prepared to tempt
The tenure of our holding. Will you draw
A present parallel, or seeming dense
Compel me query, by the which I add
Abasement to thy high estate; Demean
The loftiest findings of my soul ?

BLANCHE. Oh, Sire—

Be well persuaded I am thine for aye,
And further be convinced, thy teachings have

Been carefully attended. How may I speak,
When by thy mien 'tis quite evident
To anger thou'rt inclined? Sire, change thy look,
And bid me pleasantly proceed, lest I,
Misjudging, think thou dost divine my speech
And predispose to choler!

FARRIET. How I look

Need prejudice to no perversion; Say
(With candor) what you may, but tell me not
In shadow of thy love yon suitor comes!

BLANCHE.

Good sire! Say rather I the shadow am
To his eclipsing light!

DUKE. Sire, give me leave,—

FARRIET.

Of absence, aye, or leave to quit thy life!—
Which doubly valued, poor requital were
To compass this foul wrong! 'Tis monstrous, child!
Rank heresy to nature for a lamb
To mate the dread hyena, or the dove
To pair the buzzard; Beasts of little wit
Thus much innately know; And will my child
With less than brute discretion, act a part?
What, Daughter! Wilt thou balk at heaven, when,
With such a gracious hand, she hath bestrewn
Thy pathway? Thou, divinely blest, wilt mock
High heaven by debasing of these gifts?
Nay,—Teaser mine,—Tell me forthwith remains
The tether of paternal love intact;
That yet the overawing power of
A good example be not so impinged,
That here is warrant of futility!
Why, I do tire of my clanging tongue
That ceaselessly reiterates;—Yet I
In thy behavior, scent some faulty hints
That wearily persuade. Come, face about,
With haughty chilliness, thy back to that,
Wiles cheerfully thine eyes my fears dispel.

BLANCHE.

Oh, Father, kill me not with such reproof!
Thou chid'st as I were heinously at fault,
When I had thought mine act thyself would please.
From infancy hast thou precepts set forth,
Which (duteously observing,) shaped my course
To order this selection.—Hast not thou

Repeatedly maintained, "*That man is great
When greatness he begets;—That to be good
Were better far than great;—and humbleness
The sponsor of their truth?* Alas, when I
With Delmot's love myself enriched, methought
My joying heart (with love new generate
For thee and thy endorsement of my choice,)
Exultingly would burst its strained bounds
And send me to elysium!—Yet now
In chaos I abide, not knowing how
My filial devotion to thy will
Hath so egregiously offended.
(FARRIET *draws sword.*)

(FARRIET to BLANCHE.) Hence!

Lest in my proper wrath I strike thee down!—
As (heaven pand'ring to my strength and skill)
I now intend to smite this cringing wretch!

DUKE.

Good Sire! Be rational! I'll not entreat
In aught but honorable vein; which course
(If you but lend me hearing) I will show
Will meet thy best approval!

FARRIET.

Hold thy breath!—

Thou home despoiler! Look! Defend thyself!

BLANCHE.

Father! Father! Do restrain thyself!

(FARRIET *closes in on the DUKE who is compelled to draw.*)

DUKE.

Sire! Sire! Esteem me not so poor a knight
As make me give thee battle! Let me go
Until thy present anger be subdued
By other than such violence!

FARRIET.

What, Cur!

Dost flout me with mine age? Take that!—
A miss!—Here then!—

(*Duke knocks sword out of FARRIET'S hand—BLANCHE picks up sword and moves to side—Enter BARTO with drawn sword followed by ANDREAS.*)

BARTO.

For shame, thou crafty coward!

To thus decrepit age assail! Come pit
Thy knavish weapon 'gainst a lusty blade!

DUKE.

Aye, that will I, and willingly! Be spry!
For I do strike to kill, not maim!—And now—
Oh thou dost tremble, charlatan!—Methinks
Thy tongue hath stancher courage than thine arm—
Upon thy wav'ring sword arm take you this!—

(ANDREAS *draws and confronts the DUKE.*)

And this upon the nether!

(DUKE *wounds BARTO who falls.*)

Now for you!—

ANDREAS.

Thou miserable dwarf! Some carving take
Of thine own choosing!

BLANCHE *rushes with uplifted sword endeavoring to shield the Duke, who wounds ANDREAS, then hastily departs.*

Ah, a vicious cut!

Alarm the household! See, the wretch escapes!

(*Enter servants, etc.*)

Look to Lord Barto; mine is but a scratch!

BARTO.

Nay, mind me not. After Delmot! A purse
Of gold ducats he who apprehends
The would-be-murderer!

FARRIET.

Look to the gates!
Have all safe, barred and our adjacent ground
Have well explored! Come, friends, be led within.
Thy wounds a surgeon's skill should quickly have
Lest serious they prove.

(*Exeunt BARTO, ANDREAS and attendants.*)

BLANCHE.

Oh, leave me not

In such austerity! Turn, father, please,
Compel me not to beg my honest due,
For, as I hope to live, naught have I done
That forfeits me thy love!

FARRIET.

Thou plead'st in vain!

Think'st thou affection is dispensed in lots
Like garden truck? That heart and pulse at will
To suit a passion's whim, are made to beat?
Avaunt! Thou hast renounced parental love,
Aye, issue taken 'gainst thy flesh and blood!
As thou hast built, go thou and house! Away
Resume thy consort with that murd'rous knave,
That fugitive, who will ere dawn be jailed;
Hie to him swiftly never to return!

(BLANCHE *sinks in despair. Curtain.*)

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *Corridor in FARRIET'S home.*)*(Enter BLANCHE and ADELAIDE.)*

BLANCHE.

This must you do, and speedily, or I
Will say thou dost procrastinate and seek
By subterfuge and many petty means,
To eke the time so tediously, my plan
Shall fail a consummation; Never think it
Better to believe the pretty names
(Of pure effeminateness typical,)
It was thy wont to dress me with,
Misnomers were; That what I seemed to be,
That am I not; nor ever shall again
With thoughts so vain, imbue my self conceit.
Oh, friend! Thou know'st me not, nor I myself!
I would thou wert a mind diviner, could
The turbulence my brain and heart contain,
Have knowledge of; then with such slothful speed
Thou could'st not act; Thou say'st thou art in love;
'Tis false! Else knowing of my misery,
Wouldst thou with lightning speed my favor grant!

ADA.

Why, sweetheart! What a spitfire art thou now
To twit me with inaction! By my love,
(Which Heaven be my witness I aver
Is treasured next my soul,) I will avouch,
With wit and limb, by night and day, have I
Incessantly thy interests advanc'd!

BLANCHE.

Ah, I do know it well;—Forgive my spleen,
For senseless spleen it is, and spleen 'tis not,—
I would the Duke were come! Forgive me, sweet—
Why comes he not? It hath been well announc'd
He would 'ere noon arrive.

ADA. Be patient, Blanche,
Soon will ensue thy hour of good cheer—

BLANCHE.

Ah! Would he were less valiant, more discreet,
Then would I feel secure; yet he will face
Manhunters by the score, and by his grit
Yield up his precious life. Oh, friend, bestir!
To Cedo go! A thousand times entreat!
And if he then be lax, why still entreat!
Why stays the Duke so long? My Delmot dead?
Methinks this long delay hath turn'd my brain!
Why, I do seem to see his bleeding corpse,—
His manly front with cruel wounds agaping;
Go! Have Cedo to recall these men
Or charge them use no violence! I'll
Upon the high road wait and greet the Duke
With such sincere beseechings, ere he comes
Within the castle gates, he needs must turn.

(Exit ADELAIDE)

And order give for Delmot's safety—Ah!

(Enter BARTO with bandaged arm.)

Esteemed friend! none welcome more than thou,—
How is thy wound? I hope it pains thee not,
And yet, alack, thou wouldst have slain Delmot!

BARTO.

I would I had—Ne'er lived a meaner wretch!

BLANCHE.

O say not that! As thou art friend to me
So must thou be to him or fail us both.
Crease not so frowningly thy brow, Oh, Sir,
Enlist thy better nature and forgive.

BARTO.

My executioner I might, but he—No! No!
Bid me to do aught that mortal man may do,
(Aye though perdition terminate the act,) and I
Will cheerfully comply; But for this knave,
No man to man more enmity can hold
Than I to him.

BLANCHE.

For such abhorrence thou

Hast little cause, since in his self defense
Not with a venomous aggression was
Thy wound inflicted.

BARTO.

True; For that he dies!

Not midst the show of valor he engaged

Opposing our true blades! But ignominy
 His consort be—about his neck a rope,—
 O'erhead a low'ring sky,—beneath all space,
 Within a fallen trap a sometime prop
 For his ignoble body,—whiles circling 'bout
 The jeering populace deride!

BLANCHE.

Sir—Friend!

Thou surely wilt not let this come to pass!
 I feel thou art too warm, too close a friend—

BARTO.

Oh, Woman! Girl! Why sue ye not for me?
 The gods, my witness, much more need have I
 To have thy suing, so thou'lt sue thyself
 In my behalf! Hold not thyself so cheap
 As thus to waste upon this sordid dwarf
 Thy wealth of charms: Be mine,—Accept my name,—
 My love,—a life's devotion,—all that man
 With utmost effort may his love endow.

BLANCHE.

Oh friend! Why dost thou tax my feelings so?
 I like you well as friend, and friend remain;
 Not seek attainment of those sacred gifts
 Which woman may but to one man allot;
 And thou dost know—(be it for good or ill)
 Mine's portion'd to Delmot.

BARTO.

A bride elect

Unto a death's-head surely is thy lot,
 There is no pow'r twixt earth and heav'n can save
 This villain from the hangman! Think on this
 And make a new selection; Tender me
 This futile love, and by my soul I swear
 A lifelong serfage to thy will!

BLANCHE.

Accurs't

The fatal day that sees him hang'd! Accurs't
 The executioner and all concerned,
 That have the pow'r and will not render him
 The succor due his innocence! Accurs't
 Be thou if that thy conscience makes thee not
 Unbend thy cruel will, withdraw thy charge
 And give the valiant Delmot liberty!

BARTO.

Sweet as the tinkling of a heav'nly bell

Thy voice in censure; maledictions seem
Like sweetest approbation from thy lips.
Speak on, 'twill tire thee the rendering
Ere I grow listless; yet I'd have thee sing
Me pretty love songs; Sweet, be mine, my wife,
And never yet lived man nor ever shall,
Whose fiercest love could equal mine for thee!
My life,—thy love,—lose one,—lose both; for I
Do rate my life as naught without thy love.

BLANCHE.

Good Sir! Why wilt thou urge a fruitless suit!
No love have I for any but Delmot;
Should Heaven take him from me I could wish,
(Unholy wish,) myself enshrouded then.

BARTO.

His death-knell thou hast spoken! Let the law
Unhampered by my protest, take its course.
Think well; within thy hand thou hold'st a life;
Be murd'ress if thou wilt.

BLANCHE.

Did I believe

That in high Heaven there be mercy stored
For such inhuman, unforgiving knaves,
I'd straightway sin past all atonement; yes
If wedding you be my alternative
I'll be a murderess and my Delmot,
(A willing sacrifice) will me forgive;
Whilst you, until the devil claim your soul,
Shall unforgiven, with the brand of Cain,
Wear out your wicked life!

(Exit.)

BARTO.

So, so, you shrew!

You're not all candy! no! some vinegar
Is coursing through thy pretty blue-hued veins
Whose acid presence pleases me so well,
I'll give thee more occasion soon to show,
(In hotter passion yet), those swollen veins!
There's no mistake, she is a beauty, and
She pleads most beautifully; Should the Duke
Give her an audience ere I his mind
Have tempered to my purpose, all may fail!
'Twere well I see him first, since his soft heart
Would surely melt to her persuasion.

(Exit.)

SCENE 2.—*Hallway in Duke's palace. Enter valets, etc.*

1ST VALET.

If this will constitute no wonder, then

I know of none; Of smuggling craft
No less than ten this fortnight have
Enriched our public coffers.

2ND VALET.

Call you this

A marvel matched with that I have to tell?
Jean Lelievre is hanged; his troopers have
Surrendered up their lives and booty both
Unto the clement rulings of our law;
And more amazing! Delmot, whom, you know,
(Ill favor'd, sanguinary dwarf, the Duke's
Most recent vassal who sweats his hire
By playing spy on Farriet,) last night
In deadly peril rushed the portals through,
With frantic gesture, holding well in sight
The ducal signet ring, (as 'twere to show
Authority to pass the gates)—then fled
With lightning speed to Cedo's chambers, where
He begged protection from an angry mob,
Then audible without the palace gates.
What e'er the talismanic words he spoke,
No loud command of pompous officer
To soldiers could more promptly be obeyed;
Like magic was the crowd dispersed, the while
Denouncing loudly murderer Delmot.

1ST VALET.

Delmot a murderer! It cannot be
That he hath killed old Farriet?

2ND VALET.

Aye worse!

The facts (as near as I could glean last night,)
Assure that Farriet engaged Delmot
In deadly combat, taking umbrage at
Delmot's uncanny power o'er his child,
And being worsted, was assisted by
Lord Barto, who in turn was jabbed so hard
Lord Andreas interfered and it is said
Is wounded mortally.

1ST VALET.

But then to think

Delmot for succor and protection, should
Fly to the hall of justice, when the judge
Is bosom friend to those he sought to kill.

2ND VALET.

Did I not call my tale a marvel—men?
Which, readily resolved, is marvel none.
If any be a prophet bid him tell
Whereto these wonders tend; likewise explain
The wherefore of these revolutions here,
Since that our loving ruler rules us not.

1ST VALET.

Let it content you that Cedo, albeit
A mirth-infecting wit, takes to his reign
As he were bred to it; no elder sage
With overstock of ripe experience could
More fitly do the honors; if it be
That he hath caused these smugglers seized,
Effected Leliviere's late hanging and
Directed all these many changes, then
He is a man select, of many pick't;
But more am I inclined to think he is
A loaded die whose cast the Duke controls;
A many stringed puppet that doth act
As hints the tension of its cords.

2D VALET.

Let it suffice you, we are one and all
Beyond our just deserts well used and go!
We judge a faultless hap, a thing as rare,
And much to be commended, as the few
Who when they stumble on a raised stump
Or mount a step not on the steps constructed,
Stride quickly on and angry words forego.

(*Exeunt OMNES*)

SCENE 3.—*A throne room in the Duke's palace. Duke discovered sitting in state attended by CEDO, Lords, BARTO, and ANDREAS, each with a bandaged arm, Courtiers, Guards, etc.*

DUKE.

All being well assembled, time is ripe
For any that have grievances that ask
Amelioration of our state, to show
By word of mouth or sworn petition penned,
Wherein our late law—representatives
Have in their novel functions been remiss
Or by their zeal o'ershot authority.

CEDO.

My lord, I think there be no discontents
Brewed from our exposition of the law,
Thy mandates duly executed, have
In all particulars, *but one*, brought forth
A perfect satisfaction;—more, my lord
Than failure to encompass thine intent
Hath *this exception* done; since waxing hot
Are now ensuing new disquietudes;
The which, I hope, (my most revered lord,)
Thou wilt reserve thy judgment on, till I
Some facts (unsuited to the public ear,)
Have privately conveyed to you.

DUKE.

'Tis well,

Good Cedo; As in thy diplomacy
 I have implicit faith, I will defer
 (Until we hold a closet conference,
 Mine own determinations. Now it seems
 A most auspicious time to call this case,
 Since I have yet to learn the smallest news
 Concerning the aggressor or aggrieved;
 Who be the litigants and what the cause?

CEDO.

My lord, the facts are these,—upon the eve
 Of thy departure, (if you recollect,)
 One Farriet, a wealthy merchant here,
 Convicted of the crime of treason, was
 By executive clemency paroled,
 With the express condition, to instal
 Within the bosom of his family,
 Thine own appointee, whose sole duty was
 To keep M. Farriet in espionage.
 My lord,—as in my short acquaintanceship
 With this Delmot, I found in him a man
 Most lovable and loving, I in truth
 Cannot impartially report him; Here
 Two willing witnesses and credible,
 Stand ready to complete the narrative.

DUKE.

What! Lord Barto, likewise his friend Andreas,
 Trapped out so grimly with hospital swaths!
 This must be well explained; for woe be to
 The causers of thy most unsightly plights,
 (If that they dwell not in the great beyond.)

BARTO.

My lord, (with all due deference,) I will
 Upon thy rights divine, so far encroach
 As censure thy selection of Delmot;
 Believe me, 'twas a most unlucky choice.
 A villain he of deepest die,—a fiend
 Whose crafty, subtle machinations have
 A loving family circle (unsurpassed)
 Most cruelly disrupted and embroiled!
 The which fell acts, while striving to prevent,
 Were Lord Andreas and my unlucky self
 Made bleeding martyrs.

DUKE.

Barto! speak ye truth!

BARTO.

As God's my witness I attest within
The very lines of truthfulness! My lord,
Had I a thousand tongues, each one as glib
As now ding-dongs thine ear, yet would I lack
Of language to portray the wily moves,
Insidious advances, artful tricks,
Devised by this cunning knave, to win
From sweetest daughter love, from father hate;
Nor caring whom he hurt thus to proceed
Were we entangled; Thus, to champion
An old man's wrongs and set a girl aright,
Were we to death's door dangerously near.

DUKE.

Why this recital (lords) amazes me!
The knave Delmot from me no orders had
For such unseemly acts. Incredible!
He durst annoint his low plebian sword
With royal blood! Where be this renegade?
Drag him before us, that our stringent laws'
Severest penalties be put upon him!

CEDO.

My lord, since yesternight have I not seen
Nor known his whereabouts; at that fell time,
He being then in danger of his life,
Inside my lower chamber refuge took,
Then as mysteriously disappeared
As you arrived; since neither your lordship
Entering the gates nor he departing,
Our vigilant gate-keepers knoweth of.

DUKE.

Now by my soul this muddle vexes me!
Please you explain wherefrom acquired you
The right this roof to hold in readiness
As an asylum with free harborage
For such law-breaking refugees?

CEDO.

My lord,

Methinks I acted in authority;
Since, by thy latest admonition, I
Was unreservedly to tender him
All homage, duty and obeisancy,
Whose hand was graced by thy signet ring.

DUKE.

Now by my hopes of future life, I swear
The ring hath never left my finger!—Some
Hallucination tenanted thy brain
Or slick impostor with a counterfeit
Hath gulled thee to this false conclusion; Go,
And ferret out this cheat! Bring hither straight
The foul rogue, so we may administer
Our law's most rig'rous punishment!

CEDO.

My lord!—

DUKE (*aside*.)

(*Friend Cedo, mark me not, I do but chaff.*)

(*Exit Cedo.*)

There being many present well informed
Upon this case, it were advisable,
The best enlightener diffuse his views
To form a guidance for our present acts.

BARTO.

Your grace, it is my bounden duty to
Advise you, as a prime expedient,
To call M. Farriet; by him may you
Be best instructed.

DUKE.

Thy proposal seems

Right eminently fit. (*to officers*)

Hence, to his home

Bid him attend on us!

ANDREAS.

My lord, no need

To seek him at his erstwhile home, for he,
Distracted by thy minion Delmot's acts
And ill's resultant, hath his home renounced,
Abjured all rights of pardon and parades
The prison corridor with ranting speech,
Beseeching for a new commitment, which
Same document, being unfurnished with,
The jailer stays him out the prison walls.

DUKE.

Go lead him here! (*To officers*) . . .

Great must his suff'ring be

Thus to unman him.

BARTO.

Save your grace, I would

Your eyes had witnessed his degrading, 'twas
A most barbaric act;—When Farriet
With tott'ring step and palsied limbs,
Strove valiantly his honor to defend
'Gainst this bloodthirsty wretch Delmot.

DUKE.

My lords,

By present observations, it appears
This Delmot is a veritable fiend,
Whose fell career if it be not estopped,
May presently depopulate our court.

ANDREAS.

But for the fear of capture (true, your grace,)
He had indeed cut off thy fondest friends,
Who humbled now before thee, justice beg.

DUKE.

Why, 'tis an honest plea; All men who plead
For simple justice, ask their due,—no more;
Methought thy royal standings (prompting) might
Induce thy seeking more than equity.
In justice there's no surfeit; Right with right—
And wrong with wrong hold equipoise; As ye
But ask me use the Goddess' steel, ards, I

(Enter FARRIET, led in by officers.)

Will justly act the weigher! See, who comes?
Defer! 'Tis Farriet! in proper time,
This discourse we'll renew. Thou craz'd old man!
Sufficed it not we pardoned thee thy life,
But thou straightway must use it 'gainst our peace?
Why stay'st thou not within thy proper bound?

FARRIET.

Aye, let the query stand! Do but reverse
The source of answer and give me reply,
Why 'yond thy customary legal pale
Thou makest in mine own especial case
Such strange departures? True, thou gav'st me life,
For it (unwittingly) I tendered thanks
The which into entreaties I now change
That thou absolv'st thyself from lenity
And bid the hangman to his duty straight!

DUKE.

Old man, it seemeth wasted charity
To help one so devoid of rectitude!
Thou need'st religion, not a halter.

FARRIET.

Your grace, I bid you well attend my speech,—
To moralize (when happy) earns no grace,
But when adversity and discontent,

With subtle, hellish brunt environ us,
 'Tis then upon the gentle, patient brow
 The heavenly halo sits! 'Tis gospel truth,
 In morals, angels rather love one pupil apt,
 Than twenty teachers hypocritical!
 Most cruelly dost thou with wicked acts
 Afflict me and my poor belongings, then
 As readily with pious tongue, bid me
 To patiently maintain a godly guise;
 This can I not—My lord—I crave the law!

DUKE.

Beware thy tongue, lest thou get'st law galore!
 Dost realize 'gainst whom thou dost inveigh?

FARRIET.

Full well, your grace, a mighty potentate,
 Who, having option o'er a culprit's fate,
 Did grant him life to form a means whereby
 His worse than death might latterly result!
 All this now consummate—My home debauch'd—
 My child (who might have wedded royalty)
 By thy confederate Delmot enthrall'd,—
 I beg (who never yet was prone to beg,)
 A speedy death!

DUKE.

Hold Farriet! Thou say'st

Thy daughter could (an she be so inclined)
 Mate one of royal blood; Apprise us now
 Who may this noble be?

BARTO.

An't please your grace,

Most earnestly and urgently did I
 To her make tender of my heart and name;
 The which refusing flat for this Delmot,
 Hath well discovered his unearthly pow'r,
 Wherefrom are all these sad haps emanant.

DUKE.

Stand ye aside! This Delmot must be found
 And mischief of his making be undone!

(*Enter CEDO, followed by BLANCHE and ADELAIDE.*)

In proper time! Bring you the recreant?

CEDO.

Your grace, I think he be immortal sure!
 Late yesternight (I'll solemnly affirm,)

I did ensconce him in my lower room,
Wherein mine eyes, in searching, find no trace;
He through the floor or ceiling egress made,
Or by unnatural evanishment;
This overcoat, the only vestige left,
Which late he had upon his back,
I found in careless pile upon the floor.

BLANCHE.

Is this indeed his garment? Give it me;—
A sweet memento, treasured dear! That I
May consecrate it as a prayer mat,
Whereon my ceaseless orisons to breathe
For his prosperity and safe return.

DUKE.

Who is this froward begging hussy here?
It seems we have no courtly ceremonials,
Since any may approach us on the run!

CEDO.

My lord, I humbly beg your pardon, she
(Whose griefs unbearable impelled her speech)
Is daughter to M. Farriet.

FARRIET.

No! No!

I have no progeny! Time was when I
A child quiescent to my lightest wish,
I imagined I was father to; (Alack!
For parents' fond delusions,) I mistook,—
Her duty was to me, when not athwart
Her own set will;—Your grace, I have no child.

DUKE.

Perverse young woman: See thy father's plight,
Go bid him joy in thy obedience!
Have sense! Look where the noble Barto stands
With fortune, heart, and hand awaiting thee.

BLANCHE. (*To Duke.*)

Oh, think me not unfilial, your grace,
In all things else am I most dutiful;
Believe me, father, I do love thee as
I love my angel mother; Turn not so,
Still in thy fond affections hold me dear;
Please, father, give me blessing!

FARRIET.

Hence! Begone!

I'll none of thee.

BARTO. Sweet Mistress Blanche, give heed
To my proposals, be mine honored wife
And thus thy father's joy forever be.

BLANCHE.
Away! Attaint me not with thy lewd touch!

DUKE.
Erratic child! Take counsel of thy sire,
Be you by him directed; well you know
His teachings ever were with wisdom fraught.

BLANCHE.
Most noble lord, methought on ent'ring here,
My tongue let loose in pleading for Delmot,
Had by its eloquent persuading won,
In his behalf, thy gracious favor; Now,
When I, (with thee,) essay to strive for him,
Speech fails, my tongue obeys me not; My lord,
I beg indulgence 'gainst thy courtly rites,
Permit me (sidewise turned) address thine ear,
Since I, God help, when suing for Delmot,
With manners feat cannot straight face your grace.

DUKE.
Is it so bad, you needs must turn in shame?

BLANCHE.
No, no! your grace, mine is a sinless shame!
Abashed modesty's unwilling blush,
That now commands me from a brazen eye;
Believe me, when to thee for him I plead,
Methinks, most selfishly, I plead for thee.

DUKE.
If all be not demented, this Delmot
Is surely a magician! Bring his robe!
I'll try the wizard's magic vestment on
And do a turn in necromancy;—here

(Puts on cloak and wig.)

Enfold me Cedo;—'tis a perfect fit,
Why one not wise would think 'twere made for me;
Doth it become me, think you worthy lords?
(All stand in amazement and with profound courtesies, exclaim,
"DELMOT, the DUKE!") BLANCHE holds out her arms beseech-
ingly, then falls despairingly into ADELAIDE'S embrace.)

DUKE.
In happy time my loved one, I'll first
On these satanic malefactors spend
Mine evil parts, so naught but good remains!

BARTO.

Most gracious Prince, it ill becomes me to
Approach thee with a genuflecting knee,
Since in thy grace's estimation I
Rank lowest of the low, yet will I beg
Thou savest me from a noble Roman's death,
And forthwith send me to the hangman.

ANDREAS.

Your grace, I humbly beg his plea be mine,
To quickly grant me speedy death.

DUKE.

Not I--

Thy fate rests in the disposition of
Thy victim, Farriet, in him behold
Thy jury, judge and executioner!
Come jail the knaves: Guard well, and see to it
They find not happiness in suicide!
Now Farriet, I'll ask a boon of thee.

(*Exeunt BARTO, ANDREAS, CEDO, courtiers, guards, etc.*)

FARRIET.

Your grace, I pray you mock me not! I am
Humiliated so I dare not face
My fellow men--

DUKE.

No more of that, old friend;

A short time since I made request of thee
(In matrimonial way) thy daughter's hand,
A fond renewal this, my present plea;
I pray thy answer now be changed.

FARRIET.

I have

Been somewhat too familiar with your grace;—
Unwittingly I then denied thee what
I held some loving jurisdiction o'er,
But now, alas, when I would fain oblige,
Mine act unnatural doth thwart my will,
Your grace, I have no child to give!

(*Enter CEDO, who seems to converse with ADA.*)

BLANCHE.

O, Sire!

Withdraw those cruel words, and bid me nestle in
Thy fatherly embrace! (*FARRIET embraces BLANCHE.*)

(*DUKE gently strives to draw her to him.*)

Nay hold me close! (*To Farriet.*)

Pray let's begone; This pleasant agony
May yet unseat my wits.

(DUKE *draws* BLANCHE *under his left arm and with his right*
extracts papers from his pocket.)

DUKE.

Oh no, my sweet,

Ere you depart, for thine own private ear
I have an ancient tale, that's always new,—
While in recital, look you well on these:

(*Passes papers to* FARRIET.)

Therein you'll find a true succinct account
Of devilish plots by Barto and Andreas,
To wreck the sweet alliance holy of
A good contented family; Scan well!
And, by my princely honor I affirm
What'er thy findings be, thy verdict will
Minutely foretell consummation.

FARRIET.

Thanks.

(FARRIET *retires and reads papers.*)

DUKE.

And now, my sweet, wilt thou now overlook
The crucial tests my all absorbing love
Hath given thee and seek thy haven here
In husband's loving arms! As I won thee
In this uncomely coat—

BLANCHE.

That did ye not,

As I of late confessed; 'Twas in thy robe
Of ducal power that my heart was won.

DUKE.

Then thus I doff this sometime useful rag,
To clothe me to thy pristine love!

(*Divests himself of coat, etc.*)

BLANCHE.

My lord,

I am beside myself! pray let me go!
Thy greatness overwhelms me!

DUKE.

Nay, my love.

No royal greatness o'ertops purity.

A woman true is mate for any king!

(*They retire.* ADELAIDE and CEDO *come forward, both gazing*
after the DUKE and BLANCHE.)

CEDO.

My, how those doves now pine for company.

ADA.

As undertakers yearn for healthy friends.

CEDO.

Mark how his dignity is lost in love—

ADA.

I would thou hads't some dignity to lose.

CEDO. I hope thou art not getting choleric;
A bogus ducat for thy feelings love?

ADA.

Know then, I feel as illconditioned as
A dainty stomach with an empty purse;
For I am faint, yet have the wherewithal
To buy the market's finest delicates.

CEDO.

My love, thou woulds't not have the honeymoon
Before the ringing of the marriage bells?
*And neither maid nor wife nor widow be
A standing guy for pious charity.*

ADA.

'Tis coarse,—'Tis poetry, which at its best
Is naught but erudite lunatic thought;—
'Tis ancient, antedating Æsop's tales;—
Antiquity evolves sublimity—
Therefore sublime,—'Tis said, "'Tis but a step
From the sublime to the ridiculous."

CEDO.

Now by my heart consuming love, I'll take
That vital step and folly's wisdom shake! *(Steps up to ADA.)*
Capitulate! or by my love, I swear!
No bridal vesture of my choice you'll wear!
Come now, my love, thy lips armistice claim,
Thy cute dissembling acts deny in vain;
Sweet love, thy lips; no more hostility,
We'll wear out life in love's tranquility.

(CEDO and ADELAIDE retire.)

(Forward DUKE, FARRIET and BLANCHE)

DUKE.

Good father Farriet, art yet resolved
On sentence holding fitting punishment

For thy most heartless persecutors here?
 Be you assured, no sentence so severe.
 No penalty so harsh, but what we will give
 Immediate order for its execution !

FARRIET.

Most gracious prince ! I humbly tender thanks;
 From information writ, it doth appear,
 Lords Barto and Andreas do well deserve
 A heavy punishment; Time was, your grace,
 (Not long since gone,) when I, with spiteful tongue,
 Had cried them to the whipping post and then
 Had found a pleasure in their hanging; Now
 The gilded dross of carnal thought hath been
 Transmuted to the purest gold ! I have
 No plaint 'gainst any man; The Lord hath said—
 "Vengeance is mine !" Let them with Him abide.

DUKE.

As thou quot'st holy scripture, so will I,—
 "A tooth for a tooth, an eye for an eye;"
 Our duty straight is plainly here set forth,
 No lesser punishment will fit their case,
 Than that they now be publicly disgraced,
 And then forever banished our domain !

FARRIET.

Your grace, 'tis rather stern, yet suites me well.

(DUKE, FARRIET and BLANCHE seem to consult about contents of
*paper. Forward CEDO and ADELAIDE who converse in low
 tones.*)

CEDO.

In love, the seconds into minutes turn,
 The minutes into hours, hours to days,
 And days into interminable years,
 When on the tenter-hooks of lapsing time
 Between affiance and the marriage rite !

ADA.

Why, Cedo, how thy love doth grow apace !
 Anon thou'lt have me breaking customs, which
 Forbid me expedite the nuptial knot !
 I prithee, patience now, and bide the time
 (But six days hence,) when at the altar we
 Will plight an everlasting troth.

CEDO. (*very loudly*) No ! No !
 'Twould seem indecent haste to wed to-day !
 I pray (as savior for thy modesty)
 Thou stay'st the time awhile 'tween wedding and
 Our unannounced bans ! Be patient, girl !
 Incessantly henceforth I'll fondle thee
 And swiftly glide the grudged interim.

ADA.
 Why, thou dissembler ! Friends, he hath but now
 For his exhausted lungs, recovered breath,
 Spent in imploring me to lop the time,
 Whose non-existing brevity he now condemns.

DUKE.
 Right well we know, friend Cedo did but jest;
 Yet lurking in his banter, deftly wrought,
 Were supplications cutely manifest,
 That goad us to the blest arcadia sought
 By all true lovers; Lady loves, are you
 Content all other maidens to outdo,
 By waving trite conventionalities
 And with us to the priest, thus to appease
 Thy famished swain ?

ADA. Well, Blanche, what say you then,
 Shall we oblige these fond, impatient men ?

BLANCHE.
 Sweet Ada, I'm afraid if we deny
 (Judged by thy Cedo's sighing,) both would die.

DUKE.
 Beseech you, then, revive our waning lives,
 Becoming presently our loving wives.

FARRIET.
 Their silence with consent now blended,
 Announces clear, our play is ended.
 All dramas should a moral show,
 And ours, too palpable, I trow
 Hath taught, that in combat with sin,
 Virtue triumphantly will win.
 As for the actors, let each say
 The which wit prompts about the play.

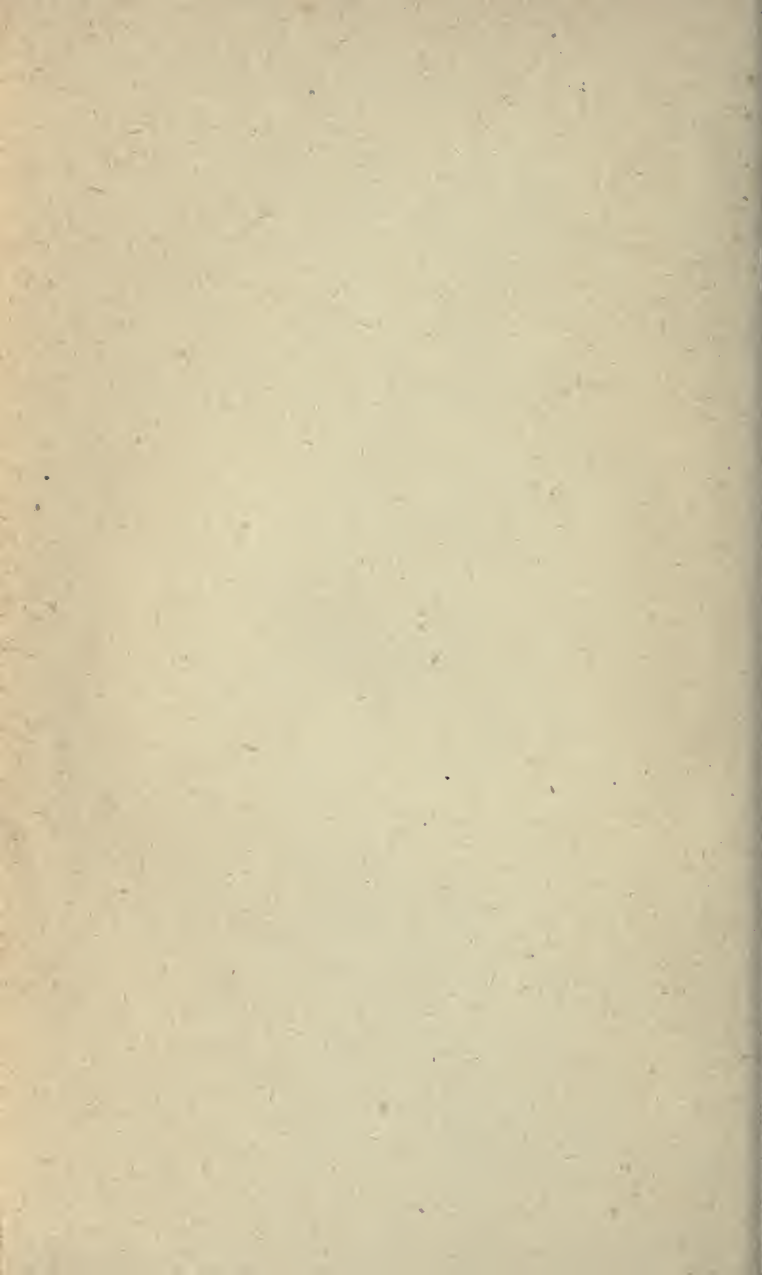
CEDO. To please you we have striven hard,

ADA. Though we've but spoken by the card;

BLANCHE. We trust our efforts were not vain,

DUKE. And hope to see you all again.





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